

**MAPPING THE SHADOW**  
**IN THE WORK OF *de SADE & SACHER-MASOCH*:**  
**CONSTELLATING SOCIOLOGICAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL POSSIBILITIES**

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partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
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**The Sociology of the Shadow**

by

**Dick Butcher**

a dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of  
York University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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**I LOOKED FOR YOU IN MY CLOSET TONIGHT.  
IT'S SILLY, I KNOW...  
I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU COME FROM, BUT I LIKE YOU.**

*From David Lynch's Blue Velvet*

## **ABSTRACT**

This work maps possibilities of the Shadow. Shadow represents that which is culturally rejected, personally devalued, and unconscious, on both an individual and collective level. In this regard, this work is problematic in that it maps the unveiling of that which is, by definition, unconscious, and hence, immediately unknown. The Shadow is most frequently recognizable through the psychological mechanism of projection and, as such, is evidenced through sociability, engaging with "The Other". The disgusting, the vile, the loathsome, the obscene, the vulgar, the antisocial are more easily located in "The Other". This work attempts to clarify how Shadow impacts relations, connectedness or lack thereof. In this sense this work addresses how Shadow tears at the very nature of relations which create the social fabric of everyday life.

This present work takes as its starting point the literary fictional works of The Marquis de Sade's *120 Days of Sodom* and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's *Venus in Furs*. These publications are treated as textual ethnographies, and as such, evidence "The Other". The realm of sadomasochism provides a fertile starting point into this mapping of Shadow by facilitating focus on considerations of desire, hierarchy, morality, understanding & identity, elements which are evidenced to be embedded in the works of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. The events of the aforementioned texts are chronicled, their narratives condensed through textual analysis, and an inventory of content "motifs" evidenced within the works is formulated. Themes generated from the motifs are analyzed.

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## INTRODUCTION

This work focuses on the Sociology of the Shadow and, in turn, the Sociology of Suffering. Coming to terms with the Shadow, both individually, and collectively, <sup>1</sup> is often a disconcerting process. Metzger describes the qualities of the Shadow:

The shadow - that darkness which is ours, which we cannot escape, but which is most difficult to contact because it is by its nature *elusive* - is the reflection of ourselves that occurs when there is no light. Therefore, to contact the shadow, *we must be willing to go into the dark*, for that is where it lives, in order to make a partnership with the unknown. If we do not move toward it, we run the risk that the shadow will come to us in a meeting that will be furtive and violent; yet moving toward it, we are overwhelmed by the fear of being engulfed....How, then, do we meet the shadow? By conceding that there are parts of ourselves that we consider absolutely foreign and alien, that we abhor, disdain, or deny, and admitting that these parts, horrific as they are, are still ourselves. To allow that there is a part of self that is both stranger and kin to us is to enter into one of the great mysteries of the psyche. The act in itself becomes a peace offering that encourages the shadow to emerge <sup>2</sup>

(p. 299/300, emphasis added).

As Metzger points out, the Shadow is disconcerting for several reasons: because it warrants a recognition of elements which may be embarrassing or uncomfortable, and an acceptance of these

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<sup>1</sup> While the Shadow may manifest both individually and collectively, the emphasis within this work will address primarily the personal Shadow.

<sup>2</sup> Metzger, D. (1991). Writing about the other. In C. Zweig & J. Abrams, (Eds.), Meeting the shadow: The hidden power of the dark side of human nature (pp. XVI-XXV). New York: Putnam's Sons.



elements, does not initially reduce the embarrassing or uncomfortable feelings. The recognition of such elements, and the owning of such elements, means that the identity of the individual, or the collective identity, is redefined.

The redefinition of identity impacts the social realm primarily because it is the interaction of social actors which creates the social. Essentially, the basic unit of analysis is social interaction. The social realm occurs *through* engaging with others, and the way individuals engage is contingent upon what they bring to the relationship. Self identity forms, and is formed by relationship with others.<sup>3</sup> The Shadow elements of individuals impacts relations. Recognizing the unpleasant aspects of individual and the collective identity, and redefining identity, constitute two aspects of Shadow work which are, to use Jung's words "disagreeable".<sup>4</sup>

The Shadow is not visible to the individual self or the collective self-identity, for example, ethnic identity, directly, but is recognizable first through others. In other words, the Shadow exists in individuals though they are *unaware* of it. The qualities which comprise the Shadow of the individual or the collective are apparent in "Others" who possess similar qualities. When Shadow qualities are evident in "Others" it allows recognition of qualities not acknowledged in the self. The distancing is protective since it

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<sup>3</sup> Moore, J., Jr., (1985). Role enactment and self-identity. In J. Berger & M. Zelditch (Eds.), Status, rewards, and influence (pp. 262-276). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

<sup>4</sup> Zweig, C., & Abrams, J. (1991). Introduction: The shadow side of everyday life. In C. Zweig & J. Abrams, (Eds.), Meeting the shadow: The hidden power of the dark side of human nature (pp. XVI-XXV). New York: Putnam's Sons.

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fabrication of academic works such as this one. Unlike “The Complete”, the fragment presupposes limitation through partiality.<sup>5</sup> This present work accentuates the fragment. The construction of the complete implies a totality which is false. This work is *a selection* of considerations. It is edited. It is, in a sense, arbitrary in that this present author has accepted, and at times rejected, elements which are evident or absent within the work. Numerous other possibilities which are absent could have been included; that which is presented could easily have been omitted. Consequently traditionally central notions may be introduced as marginal and hither-to considerations regarded as peripheral may be utilized as departure points into new areas of inquiry. The inquiry takes two starting points, to access the world of the Shadow, and considers the structure and content.

Nochlin writes of contemporary artistic representation<sup>6</sup> and suggests a shift from representing the complete body to only representing partial body parts. Nochlin addresses not only the scope of the frame of reference, but the frame itself. Specifically, the border of acknowledgement, the inclusion or exclusion of elements within or outside the frame. If, as Nochlin suggests, the fragment is a metaphor of modernity, the whole is neglected and only partial representation occurs. Contemporary perception of the fragment regards the partial *as* complete rather than evidencing some elements from an unseen whole. The

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<sup>5</sup> Paasche, G. (1996). Qualitative methods of research. SOCI 6060.03. Toronto, York University.

<sup>6</sup> Nochlin, L. (1994). The body in pieces: The fragment as a metaphor of modernity. London: Thames & Hudson.

relationship of fragments can only be, fragmented, partial, and incomplete.

The fictional works *120 Days of Sodom* and *Venus in Furs* are arguably the most important works of The Marquis de Sade and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, respectively.<sup>7</sup> By investigating the worlds created by de Sade, and Sacher-Masoch, we may be able to interrogate the social forms which these authors utilize in the construction of their fantasy worlds. The usage of the term fantasy here is not meant to convey pejorative connotations. Rather, fantasy refers to the fabrication of possibility in imagination. Much of G. H. Mead's social psychology took as fundamental the ability of humans to suspend action temporarily and engage in "minding" wherein the individual presents

...to oneself, tentatively and in advance of overt behavior, the different possibilities or alternatives of future action with reference to a given situation. The future is, thus, present in terms of images of prospective lines of action from which the individual can make a selection. The mental process is, then, one of delaying, organizing, and selecting a response to the stimuli of the environment. This implies the individual *constructs* his act...<sup>8</sup> (p. 21).

Fantasy, in this instance, refers to the ability to consider in mind, to construct possibilities. This work is a mapping of possibilities of the Shadow. Because the Shadow is unique to each individual,

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<sup>7</sup> Other works by de Sade include titles such as *Justine, ou, Les malheurs de la vertu* and *La philosophie dans le boudoir*; other work by Sacher-Masoch include *The master masochist: Tales of sadistic mistresses*.

<sup>8</sup> Meltzer, B. (1978). Mead's social psychology. In J. Manis & B. Meltzer (Eds.), *Symbolic interaction: A reader in social psychology* (3rd ed.) (pp. 15-27). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

and to each collectivity, since the acceptance and rejection of socially acceptable qualities and behaviours varies from person to person and culture to culture, the concept of the Shadow resists a succinct, an exhaustible, operational definition. This is not a linear work. It is not orderly. It, at times, does not make sense because the realm of the Shadow is not linear and is not always presented or evidenced as making sense. In other words, the realm of the Shadow may not be represented or understood as rational. The realm of the rational may be viewed as a social construction, that is, an ordering of the components of consciousness in a particular way which makes meaning of them.

While the intention of this work is to draw out themes, motifs, of the Shadow components of the literary works of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch, the nature of the inquiry is pure, basic, rather than applied research. Consequently, the form of this work is inductive, rather than the traditional format of deductive work. The inductive process is favoured for several reasons. Within the inquiry to the Shadow, the realm of the unknown, or unrecognized, is vast. By commencing with a testable hypothesis, the nature of the actual inquiry is directed. The inquiry is shaped by the restriction of the hypothesis to be tested. The inductive process allows a more broad, more free questioning of the subject area, and offers a greater degree of flexibility of inquiry within the work. This style of inquiry is used in a number of studies within the realm of interpretive sociology.

Shadow is inextricably linked with suffering. Knowing

Shadow, or not knowing Shadow (and living it without conscious recognition) is painful, and hence linked with suffering. The recognition of Shadow is painful because recognizing self-weakness *is* painful; not recognizing the Shadow may be as painful in that the experience of life may be influenced by Shadow and without recognition of the Shadow the individual may feel propelled, may feel ineffectual, due to reduced autonomy over behavioural decisions through the playing out of Shadow unconsciously. The realm of sadomasochism is interesting for this inquiry because it is, by contemporary measure and understanding, the eroticized realm wherein individuals engage willingly in the experience of suffering. This active and willing participation in the experience of suffering, pain, discomfort, seems to be antithetical to the normative direction of experience in contemporary culture wherein social actors are expected to avoid pain and suffering. Pain and suffering are understood as deleterious to human existence.<sup>9</sup> This present author questions such a position vis-a-vis pain and suffering and suggests, as do a number of authors, C. G. Jung, Marie-Louise von Franz, James Hollis, Joseph Amato, Rosemary Gordon, Lyn Cowan, that pain and suffering are not only essential to the human condition, but are ubiquitous within contemporary Western (and other) culture. In a sense, the pain and suffering of the Shadow elements of individuals and culture may be viewed as the “symptoms” of the Shadow, the indicators of the Shadow realm to those who are

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<sup>9</sup> Amato, J. (1990). Victims and values: A history and a theory of suffering. New York: Praeger.

unaware of the existence of the Shadow realm. As such, the pain and suffering point the way to a renewed wholeness, as Johnson remarks "...the *whole* place, the *holy* place".<sup>10</sup>

With an underlying emphasis on the healing or therapeutic value of suffering and pain within this present work, the focus on sadomasochism is directed at the experiential element of pain and suffering within the eroticized realm of sexuality, rather than the event of sadomasochism as a sexual event in and of itself.

If we regard de Sade as the bourgeois who, in the context of the powerful bourgeoisie, unabashedly transgress the "Other" in order to satisfy desire, we may then draw a parallel to contemporary (corporate) bourgeois who also transgress the "Other" to gain superiority within the business world, and ultimately, satisfy their own desire. Like de Sade, the emphasis is not so much on the devaluation of the "Other" per se, but that the "Other" is either accoutrement in the process of satisfaction, or altogether superfluous in terms of satisfaction. It is not as though multi-national corporate agendas deliberately negatively impact the "Other", but regard the "Other" as inconsequential in the larger goal of corporate "satisfaction".

While sadomasochism has been utilized as a vehicle to draw out some Shadow elements of the human condition, other areas may be accessed for this purpose. Health and illness/healing or religion and ritual could have been equally interesting and informative. Sadomasochism was chosen for this work because

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<sup>10</sup> Johnson, R. (1992). Your Shadow: Friend or Foe? [Sound Recording]. Boulder, Colorado: Sounds True Recordings.

the individuals within the realm of sadomasochism are usually dyadic, though groups are possible. Importantly, the sadomasochistic experience is usually not a solitary experience, though autoerotic asphyxiative behaviours (which often become known to authorities through accidental death) have been explained by suggesting that both sadistic and masochistic positions are adopted alternately by a single individual and the self is positioned as subject and object simultaneously. However, it is usual that the sadomasochistic event be played out with two or more individuals. In this sense, sadomasochism is usually *social*.

Within this present work the terms relationship, relation, and connectedness appear frequently. Relationship in this work refers to the physical proximity of individuals to each other. Relation, related, or relatedness indicates a feeling of “witness” to others. Connectedness also refers to a sense of witness in regard to social actors in proximity. To clarify, two individuals seated at separate tables in a restaurant have a relationship to each other in that they are sharing the same dining space. Two individuals who are courting, seated at the same table in the restaurant are in relation to each other, and as such, display a high degree of connectedness.

George Herbert Mead <sup>11</sup> suggests that humans *are* human because they share significant symbols. That is, individuals can be connected *through* the ability to understand collective symbols.

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<sup>11</sup> Mead, G. H. (1977). Mind. In A. Strauss (Ed.), On social psychology: Selected papers. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1956)



In other words, Mead, postulates that the world is made meaningful through the human neonate's learned ability to respond to self as object. Such self-reflexivity is dependent, suggests Mead, upon the ability to manipulate significant, agreed-upon social symbols, most importantly, the use of language.<sup>12</sup> The inner dialogue through which an individual engages in problem solving is what Mead calls "minding". Minding, argues Mead, interfaces between stimulus and response so that social actors respond to the interpreted *meaning* of their world. As such, the minding human has a behavioural *options* available. The more rigidly framed stimulus / response model, which Mead attributes to non-human individuals, limits behavioural options through instinctual response.

It was Freud who enlightened the Western world with the notion that an individual's behaviour may be influenced by drives *within* the individual, but *unknown* to the individual, namely, unconscious impulses/drives and desires. C. G. Jung, who worked initially with Freud, and who agreed theoretically of the existence of the unconscious mind, later developed a psychological model which will be useful in the forthcoming inquiry.

This present work draws from elements of the theoretical models of Mead's symbolic interactionism and Jung's analytical psychology. Mead's model recognizes the *conscious* elements

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<sup>12</sup> Berger & Luckmann write extensively of the significance of language in the construction of reality. See Chapter One, section Three: Language and Knowledge in Everyday Life.

Berger, P. & Luckmann, T. (1966). The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge. New York: Anchor.

available to a social actor while the actor is engaged in minding. Mead, however, does not indicate that unconscious elements may influence the social actor who interprets the world; Mead's model is a model of ego. Jung's model of analytical psychology includes a recognition of "the 'negative' side of the personality, the sum of all those unpleasant qualities we like to hide, together with the insufficiently developed functions and the content of the personal unconscious".<sup>13</sup> Jung called this negative side of the personality the "Shadow". Problematic here is the conceptualization and understanding of the term 'negative'. Certainly the negative is a social construction and while the dividing of acceptable and non-acceptable is a universal construction, the contents of acceptable and non-acceptable vary from culture to culture. Robert Johnson, Jungian analyst elaborates:

Not all cultures sort things out the same way. If you travel about, you have the astonishing experience on your hands, of finding out something is right-hand in one culture, and left-hand in another culture, which shows how arbitrary the process is...how arbitrary our sorting out into ego and shadow is. But sort we do. So by the time we're civilized we have a nicely balanced out teeter-totter with the good things over here and the bad things over here, and we're a reasonably civilized human being<sup>14</sup> (Johnson, 1992).

Unlike Freud, who suggests that such Shadow contents of the personal unconscious is immoral and incompatible with the conscious personality, Jung argues that the Shadow is only

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<sup>13</sup> Jung, C. G. (1973). On the nature of the psyche (R.F.C. Hull, Trans.). Princeton N.J: Princeton University Press. (Original work published 1960).

<sup>14</sup> Johnson, R. (1992). Your Shadow: Friend or Foe? [Sound Recording]. Boulder, Colorado: Sounds True Recordings.

'negative' from the conscious point of view. von Franz clarifies:

The shadow is not the whole of the unconscious personality. It represents unknown or little-known attributes and qualities of the ego - aspects that mostly belong to the personal sphere and that could just as well be conscious. <sup>15</sup> (p. 168).

In this sense, the Shadow, the 'negative', takes on a double meaning: that which is perceived as personally and/or culturally rejected, that which is devalued, considered negative; and also that which is absent, that which is *not* here, negative. This work is a search for the absent, an attempt to view the hidden, to recover and excavate the jettisoned, the wrong, the horrific, the unspeakable. "The shadow by nature is difficult to apprehend. It is dangerous, disorderly, and forever in hiding..." <sup>16</sup> (p. XVII).

von Franz continues:

We all have our favourite enemies, our best enemies, so to speak. They are generally our shadows. If people do some harm to you, then it's natural that you hate them. But if somebody doesn't do special harm to you and you just feel so madly irritated every time that person enters the room that you could just spit at him, then you can be sure that's the shadow. The best way, then, is to sit down and write a little paper on the characteristics of that person. Then look at it and say, "That's me." <sup>17</sup> (p.120).

One may wonder why such an onerous task as the

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<sup>15</sup> von Franz, M. L. (1964). The process of individuation. In C. G. Jung (Ed.), Man and his Symbols (pp.158-229). London: Aldus Books.

<sup>16</sup> Zweig, C., & Abrams, J. (1991). Introduction: The shadow side of everyday life. In C. Zweig & J. Abrams, (Eds.), Meeting the shadow: The hidden power of the dark side of human nature (pp. XVI-XXV). New York: Putnam's Sons.

<sup>17</sup> von Franz, M. L., & Boa, F. (1988). The way of the dream: Marie Louise von Franz in conversation with Frazer Boa. Toronto: Windrose.

recognition and owning of the Shadow should be considered as a necessary and reasonable intervention to the apparent betterment of the individual and social realm. Implicit within the notion of the Shadow is the idea of balance. In the words of Zweig and Abrams: "The aim of meeting the shadow is to develop an on-going relationship with it, to expand our sense of self by *balancing* the one-sidedness of our conscious attitudes with our unconscious depths" <sup>18</sup> (p. XXIV, emphasis added).

Johnson elaborates his analogy of the teeter-totter:

...anything that happens on one side of the teeter-totter *instantly* turns up, in reaction, on the other side. If there's something on the good side of your teeter-totter, there has to be something of equal weight or moment on the other side, *instantly*. It works the same way the other way. If there's something dark over here, on your left-hand side, there has to be something equally bright over on the right-hand side. This is to keep the homeostatic balance of the personality intact. The teeter-totter has to balance. It is a very, very sensitive balance, and it has to be even...

Somewhere, we were sold a bill of goods, which has had incalculable effect on our world today, on our character, and on the way in which we live, and that is we were trained erroneously, that the good life consisted of getting as far out on to the right-hand side of the teeter-totter as we could possibly go. In fact, sainthood, was defined as being the extreme right-hand side of our teeter-totter. <sup>19</sup>

Because Western culture acknowledges primarily the right-

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<sup>18</sup> Zweig, C., & Abrams, J. (1991). Introduction: The shadow side of everyday life. In C. Zweig & J. Abrams, (Eds.), Meeting the shadow: The hidden power of the dark side of human nature (pp. XVI-XXV). New York: Putnam's Sons.

<sup>19</sup> Johnson, R. (1992). Your Shadow: Friend or Foe? [Sound Recording]. Boulder, Colorado: Sounds True Recordings.

hand side of the teeter-totter, embraces only clean, efficient growth, expansion, progress, (the positive values of the culture) However, within this present work emphasis is placed on the personal Shadow.

To recapitulate: The Shadow is a term borrowed from Jungian analytical psychology which refers to unconscious elements which are considered personally or collectively unacceptable, and which may be consciously integrated. Mead's social psychology argues that humans have the capacity to be self-reflexive, and that language is a strategic component to the ability to engage in minding, reflexive problem-solving. Frequently an imbalance in the recognition of Shadow elements within the personality or collective are recognized in the "Other", either on a personal or collective basis. Chancer suggests that "the prejudiced person... *projects* onto created others a whole set of ideas, frustrations, forbidden desires, and angers that have been aroused within a particular society at a given historical moment"<sup>20</sup> (p. 171).

With this kind of conscious/unconscious consideration imported to the realm of symbolic interactionism, Goffman's face-work theory takes on new significance. Both Goffman<sup>21</sup> and Webster<sup>22</sup> refer to "frames of reference", normative guidelines of

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<sup>20</sup> Chancer, L. (1992). Sadomasochism in Everyday Life: The Dynamics of Power and Powerlessness. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

<sup>21</sup> Goffman, E. (1968). On face-work: An analysis of ritual elements in social interaction. In W. Bennis, E. Schein, F. Steele, & D. Berlew (Eds.), Interpersonal dynamics: Essays and readings on human interaction (pp. 226-249). Homewood, Ill: Dorsey.

<sup>22</sup> Webster, M., Jr., (1975). Actions and actors: Principles of social psychology. Cambridge, Mass: Winthrop.

behaviour which are collectively understood. Frames of reference are constructed and understood through the use of language because it is through language that social actors interpret their world and act upon it. Frames of reference may be codified and legal or informal and simply "known" by a given population.

Agreed-upon frames of reference come into play, are widely utilized, and come to serve as indicators of reality. The process of differentiation means that a value system occurs. It means that there is a hierarchy of value. Some things are better than others, socially speaking. Members of society agree that different things, persons, positions, acts, events have different value. Value becomes a cue for moral criteria. It is the rejected moral realm to which this work looks: the unwanted, the repugnant, the vile, loathsome, sneaking, cheating, wrong, pernicious, immoral, vulgar, and wicked.

While deviance may be related to the realm of the Shadow, the notion of the Sociology of the Shadow is significantly different in that the pejorative connotations associated with acts of deviance are absent in the understanding of the Sociology of the Shadow. In other words, the acts of the deviant and the acts of the Shadow may indeed be similar, but the interpretation of each is markedly different. The study of deviance has to do with the study of conformity or non-conformity. To discern whether someone is deviant, categories of normative and accepted behaviour and attitude need to be constructed from which to measure difference. It is this type of difference of which Derrida

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Something may be considered forbidden or disreputable, but it may also simultaneously be viewed as interesting, fun adventurous, or exciting.

Certain activities may appear even more alluring to some people because they are considered "out of bounds"...

Th[e] mixture of disapproval and intrigue provides an instructive...edge to the study of deviance. Beyond (a) certain pragmatic or practical advantages that may be associated with deviance involvements in some instances and (b) inadvertent predicaments in other cases, (c) the disrespectability associated with deviance sometimes represents part of its appeal. Although somewhat at odds with the moral ideals of the broader community, more or less simultaneous definitions of deviance involvements as interesting, alluring, and excitingly dangerous...seem somewhat commonplace in the community and appear to form the base of people's interest in deviance and the foundations for "the deviant mystique" in the community at large. (p. 2/3)

To recapitulate, deviance is not *other* than that which is non-deviance per se, but rather a negatively defined

"situation...activity, actor, idea[s], or state of affairs" <sup>26</sup> (p. 2).

That which is regarded as deviance becomes so through the application of the definition. Deviance is not identified through rigidly established uniform qualities intrinsic to particular actors or things. Further, deviance may be regarded ambivalently, since disreputable individuals or activities imbued with "the deviant mystique" may be simultaneously attractive and repellent.

Shadow is created by the obstruction of light. In metaphorical terms, the absence of light refers to the realm of the unconscious, psychic contents which are unconscious. Freud's

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<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*



unconscious consisted, primarily, of *repressed* elements of consciousness. The unconscious became the wasteland of unwanted or unacceptable ego elements. Jung's concept of the Shadow is by far more rich, offering as well, repressed elements, but, more importantly, elements which are potentialities of the individual, as yet undeveloped. It contains also a reservoir of socially "unacceptable" behaviours and attitudes which have been dismissed and discarded by the criteria of social standards of acceptability.<sup>27</sup> Viewed positively, the Shadow is then the gateway to our own individuality. In other words, some of the Shadow occurs through the selection of acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours based upon normative social responses. Whitmont writes:

The term *shadow* refers to that part of the personality which has been repressed for the sake of the ego ideal. Since everything unconscious is projected, we encounter the shadow in projection - in our view of "the other fellow" <sup>28</sup> (p.12).

In this regard, that which initially appears as an entirely psychological concern shows itself to be particularly strategic in terms of sociability, in that sociability occurs between individuals. When we engage with others, we, indeed, engage with not only *an* other but also the "*Other*". Whitmont continues

Where a shadow projection occurs we are not able to differentiate between the actuality of the other person

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<sup>27</sup> Bly, R. (1990). The long bag we drag behind us. In J. Abrams & C. Zweig (Eds.), Meeting the shadow: The hidden power of the dark side of human nature (pp.6 - 12). New York: Perigee.

<sup>28</sup> Whitmont, E. (1990). The evolution of the shadow. In J. Abrams & C. Zweig (Eds.), Meeting the shadow: The hidden power of the dark side of human nature (pp.12 - 19). New York: Perigee.

and our complexes. We cannot tell fact from fancy. We cannot see where we begin and he ends. We cannot see him: neither can we see ourselves. Ask someone to give a description of the personality type which he finds most despicable, most unbearable and hateful, and most impossible to get along with, and he will produce a description of his own repressed characteristics - a self-description which is utterly unconscious and which therefore always and everywhere tortures him as he receives its effect from the *other* person (p. 14).

It is most important to note that those qualities which at this point are repressed as incommensurable with persona ideals and general cultural values may be quite basic to our fundamental personality structures, but owing to the fact of their repression they will remain primitive and therefore negative. Unfortunately, repression does not eliminate the qualities or drives or keep them from functioning. It merely removes them from ego awareness: they continue as complexes. By being removed from view they are also removed from supervision and can thereby continue their existence unchecked and in a disruptive way. The shadow, then, consists of complexes, of personal qualities resting on drives and behavior patterns which are a definite "dark" part of the personality structure....The shadow qualities are usually in glaring contrast to the ego's ideals and wishful efforts (p. 15).

The Shadow is a complex of psychic energy which houses not only that which is socially unacceptable and which has been discarded by social pressure <sup>29</sup> at the expense of the potential or essence of the individual, but also that which is undiscovered potential within the individual. Hillman's notion of calling, fate, and character revolve around his assumption of what he calls the Acorn Theory. Hillman suggests that "today's main paradigm for

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<sup>29</sup> This kind of selection process may be at the expense of, or contrary to the direction of actualized potential of, the individual; the qualities repressed may be repressed at the expense of the individual's development/wholeness.

understanding human life, the interplay of genetics and environment, omits something essential - the particularity you feel to be you" <sup>30</sup> (p.6). Further " ...each life is formed by its unique image, an image that is the essence of that life and calls it to a destiny" (p.39). Crucial to the Acorn Theory is the notion that each individual, as with the nut of the Acorn, contains a blueprint, complete, pre-birth, and the life course, ideally, involves the unfolding of the inherent qualities unique to the individual; the acorn becomes the tree: it "knows" this and enacts this coded information.

It is to this potential of the individual soul that Whitmont refers when he suggests that the elements repressed to the unconscious may be key qualities of the individual. What is crucial to recognize in terms of repression based upon social norms is that the Shadow may be representative of that which is unique to the individual, and rejected by the standardizing normative structure of society. Access to, and understanding of, unconscious potentialities through Shadow can be emancipatory.

The idea of the Shadow, regardless in which realm the investigation takes place, regardless in which realm the Shadow becomes evident, always has to do with balance because the Shadow is the realm of the unlived versus the lived, the potential versus the actualized. It is the unavailable, the unknown, or the hidden aspect of the continuum. The Shadow has to do with that which takes place "behind closed doors", that

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<sup>30</sup> Hillman, J. (1996). The soul's code: In search of character and calling. New York: Random.

which is “swept under the carpet”. In this sense, “the flip side” of whatever is presented becomes significant, crucial. The Shadow is all that which is disgraceful to the individual, undesired, and unknown. To make conscious Shadow material is always frightening, since it involves a kind of brutal self-gaze. It is also frightening because the incorporation of the unknown does not mean that all will remain the same. It is likely that the inclusion of previously unintegrated elements will induce changes whose outcomes are insecure and unknown. Change means that things will be different, though not necessarily improved. In a culture which places so much emphasis on the rational scientific process of investigation and which focuses upon causal elements, finding the unknown can be truly a fearful experience.

Alfred Ribi <sup>31</sup> writes about fear:

However, our irrational fears don't care a whit whether we think they are or aren't allowed to exist. In point of fact, are we not at least as subject to fears as the men and women of mediaeval times? But whereas the people of earlier times were frightened by mythical fears, we rationalize ours. We do not recognize our contemporary demons, because they are camouflaged behind a semblance of rationality. (p. XI)

In the above excerpt we see that the Shadow is related to the demonic. The demonic is positioned at one end of a continuum from the opposite condition of the godly and the good. The socially acceptable position of the individual is balanced by/through the Shadow realm: fear of, and repression of, the Shadow by no means depotentiates it. Rather, it lives

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<sup>31</sup> Ribi, A. (1990). Demons of the inner world: Understanding our hidden complexes. Boston: Shambala.

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Christian conception of....sin. <sup>33</sup> (p. 36). None the less, his division between the "higher" man and "ordinary human beings" separates, banishes, Shadow qualities to the "Other" <sup>34</sup> (p. 263). Indeed, it is the very act of discerning, differentiation, valuing that creates Shadow. It is then not surprising that, as Johnson points out earlier within this present work with the Shadow as balance, Nietzsche's work is replete with cues to Shadow. his emphasis on "higher" man *invites* Shadow.

Before moving to Shadow considerations found within de Sade and Sacher-Masoch, a discussion of the method of this work will help to show *how* the Shadow was evidenced.

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<sup>33</sup> Niebuhr, R. (1964). The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation. (Vol. 1, Human Destiny). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. (Original work published 1941)

<sup>34</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). Beyond good and evil. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). Basic writings of Nietzsche (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

## METHOD

Colloquialisms pertaining to 1) the body, particularly sexual organs, and or, sexual activities, and 2) animals and the human/animal division, are ways contemporary Western urban culture indicates dissatisfaction with the realm of the negative. Derogatories frequently take sexist/sexualized categories as their base: she's a cunt, he's a prick, they're assholes, he's so fucked-up. The human/non-human order is also vulnerable when derogatories are issued: she's a bitch, he's an ass. As Bakhtin observed, "[m]odern indecent abuse and cursing have retained dead and purely negative remnants of the grotesque concept of the body"<sup>35</sup> (p. 28).

Beginning with the observation that the vocabulary which represents the realm of the negative is frequently coarsely sexual/sexist, the present author started to look at areas of sexuality which were particularly charged with perceived negativity. The realm of sadomasochism immediately came to mind. Certainly there are other areas of sexuality which are considered to be negative: paedophilia, bestiality, rape, but sadomasochism (which involves sexuality and suffering) incorporates adult/adult sexual relations in a (to some extent by contemporary definition) consensual relation. Indeed, the age of

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<sup>35</sup> Bakhtin, M. (1984). Rabelais and his world (H. Iswolsky Trans.).  
Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.  
(Original work published 1965)

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ethnographies, the authors as ethnographers of the fictional realm which they represent through their work. As the construction of reality is keenly linked with the application and manipulation of significant symbol systems (language), the term "fictional realm" is to be taken somewhat liberally, since the interpretive process is a process of synthesis. Within a text, "[t]he nature of [the] 'discourse'" <sup>38</sup> (p. 6) cues the reader to significant aspects of the text beyond simply that which is verbally represented within the text. Consequently, awareness of the construction of the text; that which *is*, and is *not* represented within the work; the voices represented and the voices absent; the arrangement of the text; all contribute to influencing the reader of the text. Not surprisingly, there is "no possibility of a neutral text" (p. 7).

In his work entitled *Literary Methods and Sociological Theory: Case Studies of Simmel and Weber*, <sup>39</sup> Bryan Green discusses the style of sociological writing. He notes that evaluation of good sociological writing is conceptually "imported across the boundaries of sociology from other language realms" (p. 15). Green notes that the language of the natural sciences, standard public language, and literary are language are the most commonly utilized language forms used to measure sociological works. Indeed, Green's insight that the style of a sociological work, an unusual style as in the case of George Simmel for

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<sup>38</sup> Atkinson, P. (1990). The ethnographic imagination: Textual constructions of reality. London: Routledge.

<sup>39</sup> Green, B. (1988). Literary methods and sociological theory: Case studies of Simmel and Weber. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

example, may be “valuable to us in itself as a performative example of how to think differently” (p. 20). In terms of the style of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch, both authors write of markedly dramatic relations, which encompass erotic relations, which are antithetical to culturally defined idealized relations. But importantly, both authors write in a style which is intimate and almost gently draws the reader into another strange and comparatively problematic world. It is as though both authors lull the reader into the inverted worlds presented in their texts. In a sense, both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch render landscapes of possibilities concerning interactions with others. Green states that “the compositional medium of sociology....consists of semantic materials drawn from and referring to social life” (p. 24). Comparing sociology with art, Green suggests that “the methodological and substantive content of an art form...will be shaped by a compositional medium as a point of departure and return” (p. 24). Conventional understanding of sociological style assumes that the content of sociology is separable from its style and the value of sociological writing is to be found in content and not style. Green argues that theoretical value is to be found “in certain literary ways of turning words from the linguistic medium of social life into representational knowledge of it” (p. 18). By returning to ancient texts, and “extending antecedent theory” through the attempt to treat theory as literary work, one may re-read traditional works in an entirely new light. conversely, within this present work, the process of re-reading de Sade’s and

Sacher-Masoch's literary works as archival social data through which sociological insights may be generated and links to sociological theory may be made, may also, as Green articulates, "find a place in the wonderfully useful" (p. 7). "Whereas science seeks a conceptual interlock with real objects and events, as proven by empirical entry into the world, art uses worldly materials to create objects and events that are simultaneously inside and outside of everyday reality; of the world, yet somehow at odds or in tension with it... [and] are in a fundamentally different relationship to reality with regard to authentication" (p. 25). In other words, that the work of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch is fictional does not preclude them from offering rich sociological and psychological data for analysis. Indeed, as Green points out:

Thus, I would not ask, What did Durkheim intend, and why? But What reading experiences do these words elicit, and how? the proposal to treat [literary texts as archival sociological data] makes the stylistic *how* of writing - what the work is doing in the course of composing descriptive and expository content - crucial instead of marginal (p. 29).

Marcel Danesi approaches sociological analysis semiotically. Meanings, interpretation, understanding all stem from the ability to utilize language. Such a semiotic approach to sociological analysis includes two terms which are of interest within this present work: *mimesis* and *signifying osmosis*<sup>40</sup>.

Mimesis may be defined as the conscious "tendency of human beings to imitate certain behaviours in order to acquire

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<sup>40</sup> Danesi, M. (1994). Cool: The signs and meanings of adolescence. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

them” (p. 45). While osmosis is a term which describes a process of acquisition through absorption, signifying osmosis “is a term referring to the osmotic assimilation of behaviour as it unfolds in relation to socially meaningful, or *signifying* stimuli” (p. 45). These are interesting conceptual considerations in light of the texts at hand. Certainly de Sade’s storytellers accounts constellate and transmit scenarios of possible behaviour which is then enacted. This is a clear example of mimesis. Wanda von Dunajew, on the other hand, begins to take on the role of dominant in a way which appears to be beyond the exact instruction of Severin. For example, Wanda states that she is beginning to enjoy the position of dominant, though she vacillates around her acceptance / rejection of such behaviour. It is the transmission of, and assimilation of, behaviours in Wanda, from Severin, which go beyond explicit request which constitute signifying osmosis.

Danesi is concerned with the social construction of reality through language, through the use of symbols and signs, through lived experience with others. Certainly the work of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch offer a documentation of such lived experience.

Dorothy Smith’s *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology*<sup>41</sup> is also a pertinent text for this enquiry in that Smith acknowledges that a “sociology is a systematically developed knowledge of society and social relations” (p. 105). However, Smith argues that women have traditionally been

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<sup>41</sup> Smith, D. (1987). The everyday world as problematic: A feminist sociology. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

absent from many sociological texts which have been authored by men. Indeed, “[f]or actual subjects situated in the actualities of their everyday worlds, a sociology for women offers an understanding of how those worlds are organized and determined by social relations immanent in and extending beyond them”(p. 106). The worlds of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch involve representing individuals who have traditionally been absent from sociological representation. For example, the collective against whom de Sade’s “friends” continually transgress may be viewed, as Smith views women, as an extant collective denied significant representation in text. So too Sacher-Masoch’s powerful woman, (Venus / Wanda) overriding the submissive and docile male (Severin) is virtually absent in traditional textual representations; saints and the vanquished may indeed be framed as docile and submissive, but such treatment of power relation in traditional texts does not usually centre around sexual excitement in regard to such submission. One may conclude that the submissive, regardless of gender, is virtually absent from representation. In this sense, while developed to a greater or lesser degree, perhaps we may regard the inclusion of such submissives in each work as giving representation to categories of individuals who have been often removed from literary representation at all. The variation between authors here presented, that some submissives relish their position, others reviled by it, may be viewed as secondary to the significant fact that the submissives are *present*. Women, as individuals participating in ancillary roles to men, may be

paralleled to the ancillary individuals evidenced in the literary works of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch.

That Smith is involved in the analysis of everyday life compliments the everyday life presentation within each of the texts analysed in this present work. As such, they are ethnographies, offering the everyday lived experiences of the characters within the texts. Insightfully, Smith notes that “[i]ndividuals’ accounts of their experience may disclose a level of organization beyond their experience” (p. 128). Smith, while not articulating it in terms of “motif” specifically, is suggesting that specific event may be reduced to structural tableau-like “motif” components.

That the work of both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch is fictional lends itself to an ahistorical investigation of that which is represented within these works. They are historical because they are retrieved from a past period at which time they were written. But the documents themselves are fiction, and as such, document a concept, a style of relationship, rather than present a record of historical events. These works, written long ago, are read in *the present*, and can only ever be read *in the present*, even if the reader tries to read them *as though* they, the reader, were located in the past. “The practising ethnologist is a person situated somewhere (his ‘here’ of the moment) who describes what he is observing or what he is hearing at the very moment”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Augé, M. (1995). Non-places: Introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity. London: Verso.

(p. 8).

These works are understood in contemporary society as being extreme, fringe literary works which are erotically or horrifically charged. The appellation "sadist" or "masochist" are still in common usage though it is questionable as to the number of individuals who have, in fact, accessed, analyzed, understood, *read* the original work of de Sade or Sacher-Masoch.

What de Sade and Sacher-Masoch represent in contemporary society with their literary works are early documents of the erotic Shadow realm. These works are considered seminal for those who seriously engage in sadomasochistic practices. While those who engage in serious sadomasochism may not be aware of the texts of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch directly, the subsequent literature within the world of sadomasochism takes as foundational the work of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. As such, they may be viewed as seminal works <sup>43</sup>.

The term sadomasochism is derived from the family names of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. This work does *not* focus on putting into context the work of these authors within a particular time period. Rather, this work returns to the original source - elements intrinsic to the term sadomasochism *must* be displayed in the literary works of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch, since they *are* the inspiration behind sadomasochism. This work revisits the original texts because the works still carry a charged "negative" quality; the appellation of sadist or masochist, even within the contemporary world of multiple voice and individuality, is still

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<sup>43</sup> Informal interview with Robert Dante (Toronto. June 12, 1998).

largely unacceptable.

These fictional works investigated in this work are social, of interest to the discipline of sociology, in that they are *representations of relations, relationships, connectedness, distance, isolation*. This work is particularly concerned with identifying elements contained within the writings of both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch that documented the Shadow elements of relationship. Both these aforementioned authors have produced fictional social worlds which present interactions between and among social actors and as such may be considered *social*. The work of de Sade was originally written over 200 years ago and Sacher-Masoch's oeuvre was completed over 100 years ago<sup>44</sup>. By revisiting the original texts and conducting an analysis using the original texts as data, this researcher (and so too the reader of this document) is allowed entry into other worlds. The intention of both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch was to invite the reader into another world, a world perhaps quite different in possibility and experience from the one usually encountered in everyday life. It is the secret otherness of the works which identify them *as* Shadow worlds. The hypothetical constructions of the fictional works act as indicators of relational possibility. This author acts as an interface between the text and the reader of this work, providing an analysis, an ethnographic textual analysis, a thick

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<sup>44</sup> Exact dates for these publications vary depending upon information source. 120 Days of Sodom was written by de Sade during an episode of imprisonment in France. It was written covertly and apparently over a period of several years. It is estimated that the work was written between 1782-1785. Sacher-Masoch's Venus in Furs was written 1869/1870.



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understand the experiential events which have occurred already. Feminist methodology recognizes the position of the researcher as contextualized, i.e. located. That which the researcher brings to the inquiry is influential and impacts on the data and the data interpretation. <sup>48</sup>

The selections from both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch are presented because they resonate for me. Certainly the texts are rich as vehicles into sociological inquiry. As Clandinin and Connelly suggest, a researcher's interpretation or reconstruction [of experiences] "makes a difference to [the] understanding of the passage....[one] knows only what [the researcher has] chosen to tell and that is a highly selective constructive act [on the part of the researcher]" <sup>49</sup> (p. 414).

To recapitulate, this inquiry began as an exploration into the textual-fictional realm of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. The appealing aspect of pure research is the freedom to access *that which is there*. The construction of hypotheses to be tested may skew the research to such an extent that the exercise becomes an event which is undergone simply to support the original assumption. In this exploration few assumptions began the

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<sup>48</sup> For further reading regarding the effect of the researcher on data collection see:

Frankenberg, R. (1993). White women, race matters: The social construction of whiteness. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Reinharz, S. (1992). Feminist methods in social research. New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>49</sup> Clandinin, J., & Connelly, M. (1993). Personal experience methods. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), Handbook of qualitative research (pp.413-427). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

inquiry. It was noted that the realm of the negative often was expressed in contemporary colloquialisms which were related to the body, particularly vulgar sexuality. The realm of the vulgar sexuality seemed, even some 200 years later, to rest with de Sade, and Sacher-Masoch seemed to be already linked as a pole on a continuum of behaviour evidenced in the term sadomasochism. Sadomasochism then is understood within this work, at times, as an extreme, and as such, invites exploration of the Shadow realm. The ethnographic textual analysis revealed a number of motifs within the works of both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch.

An attempt to categorize these motifs over a period of time moved from 12 core categories, to 9, to 4. Sensitivity to remaining "true" to the original texts was easier with the use of motifs. The motifs helped to present the underlying ideas in the texts which sometimes becomes obscured by the florid descriptions of the events themselves.

Because this work has been constructed over time, and because the analysis is primarily an emergent inductive analysis, though elements of deductive analysis are also included, some of the considerations within this work have shifted from the time of writing. However, to change the history of this work reduces it, through masking the emergent quality, makes it disappear. It is for the reason of preserving the emergent quality of this work that some the original assumptions within the present work are retained. This work is similar to a painting which has been

constructed over time. The artist works the canvas, leaves that with which he is satisfied, and sometimes leaves that with which he is *dissatisfied*. The sensibility for covering or presenting is the realm of the artist. This work is similar in that as the work evolves the insights into the authors becomes more clear. But the text has not been homogenized and altered to mask the emergent qualities of the analysis.

In fact, this work has been left deliberately rough, unfinished, unsmoothed, so as to continually rouse the reader, prevent the reader from lapsing into some kind of predictable anticipation of the events to be found within this work. The more seamless the work, the more likely the reader forgets the arbitrariness of inquiry, the reality of fragment over the construction of the complete. Incongruity breeds criticism in the rational mind. Sociology demands social criticism. By allowing the imperfect construction of this inquiry to be easily viewed the reader is cued to criticism of the work, which in turn, behoves the reader to actively participate in providing alternatives to those which are regarded as vulnerable in this text. The flaws in this work, clearly present, propel the reader to be *involved*; the flaws of a work are always the points which invite the reader into the dialectic. By making them readily recognizable the reader may more easily enter into dialectic response.

This work fumbles, inquires, suggests, considers, juxtaposes. It is a tentative work, a beginning. The very nature of the tentative is to explore in a way which is uncertain. The

avoidance of arguing supporting hypothesis, disproving previous hypotheses, is a decision seeking intellectual safety. While certainty may appear safe, in fact the “certitude of traditional texts demands intellectual servitude”<sup>50</sup> (p. 335). In other words, to be *certain* in the creation of texts, and the reading/interpretation of texts means that intellectual considerations are framed (rigidly) with the parameters of the agreed-upon certainty; such restrictions direct considerations (servitude) to the certain starting point. This present work is uncertain, and hence, draws from a number of authors, some of which are elaborated, some of which remain undeveloped. The undeveloped elements of this work have not been edited, but rather, left as indicators of possibility. These possibilities may be useful in framing the present work, or may point the way for future sociological inquiry.

The events which are analyzed in the texts of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch serve as clues, from which inferences are made. In this sense the work is inductive. But extrapolation through sociological and psychological considerations, moving to abstract general ideas within the disciplines of sociology and psychology, and then back to the original texts is indeed a deductive process. While the emphasis of this present work is the inductive process of evidencing the clues offered by de Sade and Sacher-Masoch, the inclusion of the deductive process, moving from theoretical back

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<sup>50</sup> Visano, L. (1997). *Dracula as a contemporary ethnography: A critique of mediated moralities and mysterious mythologies*. In C. Davison (Ed.), *Bram Stoker's Dracula: Sucking through the century, 1897-1997* (pp. 331-350). Toronto: Dundurn.

to clue, gestures to a classic scientific frame of analysis - the vacillation between inductive and deductive reasoning and evaluation.

The technology which is available to record, catalogue, and store intellectual considerations such as the present work continue to advance, to become more sophisticated. Culturally, we may now preserve academic works for much longer periods than scholars hither-to. With the ability to access academic documents for longer periods, and more efficiently in the future (because of the technological advancements mentioned earlier), it is likely that the interest in, and utility of, the academic documents will shift, in light of the historical situations at the time of (future) access. The intention/focus of the document *at the time of writing* may be far less interesting to future academics than non-focal elements contained within the original document, which become salient for future academics. In other words, because academic contributions may be accessible to future academics unlike any previous availability, the utilitarian aspects of academic works may shift from the original intention of the work to incidental elements at the time of writing, which have, through the passage of time, acquired greater interest for future academics.

The next sections of this work identifies the motifs found within the work of de Sade's *120 Days of Sodom* and Sacher-

Masoch's *Venus in Furs*.<sup>51</sup> While the motifs may be repeatedly listed at several points throughout this analysis, they will be addressed only once; they are repeated (as acknowledgement) only when subsequent quotations clearly evidence motifs already discussed earlier in this present work.

Let us now turn to the inquiry into the texts of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch.

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<sup>51</sup> A complete inventory of motifs may be found in the Appendix of this work.

## de Sade and Sacher-Masoch

The work of both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch appear to present themes of relationship which are regarded as extreme and undesirable compared to the usual frameworks of relationship found in contemporary Western urban culture. But upon closer inspection both the work of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch portray *Shadow elements of relationship*. de Sade differs from Sacher-Masoch in that de Sade's characters are in relationship only to the extent that they are in proximity to each other. Relatedness is virtually absent within the work. The "friends" reach accord through the recognition of shared interests; it is as though some kind of truce is called by those moving in the same direction. But the "friends" are in relationship, though not related to each other.

Sacher-Masoch differs from de Sade in that Severin, Sacher-Masoch's character, desires a seemingly impossible relationship. The paradox is that Severin wants closeness and distance simultaneously. His desire for together/apart seems impossible. But the ability of the human mind is to be able to desire the impossible. The desire to be with each other is extinguished, vanishes, once Wanda begins to internalize and execute the style of relations which Severin demands. One is reminded of de Sade's insight that happiness is not to be found in the satisfaction



of desire, but in desire itself<sup>52</sup> (p. 361). At that point then, Severin too, loses interest in the relationship. The acquisition of the desired distant condition results in the demise of the relationship. Sacher-Masoch offers a glimpse into the paradoxical desire of humans and the *process of recognizing paradox*. Both de Sade, and Sacher-Masoch provide the reader with an attempt to portray possibilities of human relations. Perhaps it is the honesty, the undrapedness, the ripping of the veil in regard to the explanation of human relations which makes both these works so feared, so unacceptable, so offensive. It is as though these works point to the nature of the social in a way that leaves the idealized (and impossible?) conditions of relationship behind, and simply indicates the possibilities and full complexities of relationship and relatedness.

Contemporary understanding of sadomasochism may be quite different from that which is evidenced within the works of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. With that in mind, the following analysis of *120 Days of Sodom* and *Venus in Furs* will provide material with which to assess their content. Both Sadistic Personality Disorder and Masochistic Personality Disorder<sup>53</sup> are to be found as psychopathological conditions in the Diagnostic and

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<sup>52</sup> de Sade, M. (1954). 120 days of Sodom. In P. Dinnage (Ed. & Trans.) Marquis de Sade: Selections from his writings and a study by Simone de Beauvoir. New York: Grove. (Original works published 1782 - 1796)

<sup>53</sup> Masochistic Personality Disorder has now been renamed Self-defeating Personality Disorder "to avoid the historic association of the term *masochistic* with older psychoanalytic views of female sexuality and the implication that a person with the disorder derives unconscious pleasure from suffering" (p. 371).

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repeated occurrence of at least four of the following:

- (1) the use of physical cruelty or violence for the purpose of establishing dominance in a relationship
- (2) humiliates or demeans people in the presence of others
- (3) harsh treatment or discipline of dependent
- (4) finds the psychological or physical suffering of others amusing or pleasurable
- (5) has lied so as to be able to inflict harm or pain on others
- (6) compliance of others is attained through fear (i.e. intimidation, terror)
- (7) restricts the agency of significantly close others
- (8) fascinated by violence, weapons, injury, or torture

Only items 2, 3, 4, and 7, are to be found in de Sade's works.

The definition for Self-defeating Personality Disorder is as follows:

A pervasive pattern of self-defeating behavior, beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts. The person may often avoid or undermine pleasurable experiences, to be drawn to situations or relationships in which he or she will suffer, and prevent others from helping him or her, as indicated by at least five of the following:

- (1) chooses people or situations which lead to disappointment, failure, or mistreatment
- (2) rejects assistance from others
- (3) positive personal events are responded to with depression, guilt, or pain
- (4) incites angry or rejecting responses from others and then feels hurt or humiliated
- (5) rejects opportunities for pleasure or enjoyment
- (6) fails to accomplish tasks crucial to his or her personal objectives of which he or she is capable
- (7) engages in excessive and unsolicited self-sacrifice

Of the 7 categories listed above, only 4 and 7 are to be found in the original work of Sacher-Masoch. Further, the humiliation which Severin experiences is interpreted as pleasurable. Part of the reason why this model is unsatisfactory is the assumption that emotion is discrete. In fact, "emotion" may be a complex interplay of 3 or more discrete emotions evidenced at any one time. The model purported by the DSM III-R implies that humiliation may be experienced in isolation only. The pleasurable aspect is entirely distinct from the other. The DSM III-R refers to pleasure, rather, the denial of pleasure. The

underlying assumption is that pleasurable events are universally perceived as having the same constituent components. This implies that the experience of pleasure requires participation in certain acts deemed "pleasurable". The question not articulated in the DSM III-R is *whose* pleasure? More importantly, because pleasure is so entwined with the notion of power and leisure, any pleasure which is derived from selflessness and a subservient stance is so antithetical to the normative construction of pleasure that it becomes problematic and is unrecognized *as* pleasure.

The terms Sadism and Masochism were derived by Krafft-Ebing. "...the desire to inflict pain upon the sexual object, and its reverse...received from Krafft-Ebing the names 'sadism' and 'masochism' for its active and passive forms respectively" <sup>55</sup> (p. 70). As shall be evidenced within this work, neither sadism nor masochism are behaviours which may be accurately defined in the manner put forward by Krafft-Ebing.

Freud states that both sadism and masochism "occupy a special position among the perversions, since the contrast between activity and passivity which lies behind them is among the universal characteristics of sexual life" <sup>56</sup> (p. 72).

Continuing, Freud indicates that a "sadist is always at the same time a masochist, although the active or the passive aspect of the perversion may be the more strongly developed in him and may represent his predominant sexual activity. We find, then, that

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<sup>55</sup> Freud, S. (1977). On sexuality: Three essays on the theory of sexuality and other works (J. Strachey, Trans.). London: Penguin. (Original work published as English translation 1949)

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.*

the impulses to perversion occur regularly as *pairs of opposites*<sup>57</sup> (p. 73, original emphasis). Opposites suggest continuum, continuum suggests balance, and balance suggests Shadow.

The following considerations, mapping, is structured so that to avoid unnecessary repetition, motifs treated in either the de Sade or Sacher-Masoch chapters are interchangeable unless otherwise specified. For example, considerations of pain which appear in the de Sade chapter may be applied to the text of Sacher-Masoch as well, though they do not appear in the Sacher-Masoch chapter under the motif of pain.

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<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*

# THE MARQUIS de SADE

## 120 DAYS OF SODOM

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de Sade begins his work *120 Days of Sodom* by putting into historical context the forthcoming narrative. This work takes place near the end of the reign of Louis XIV in France, around the beginning of the 1700's. de Sade characterizes this period as lustful and debauched. <sup>59</sup> Further, the participants in such lust and debauchery span the status hierarchy; the "low-born and vulgar" and the titled, both, engage in such behaviours. de Sade is setting the scene, introducing a context for his writing which ultimately works as a transition, softening the debauchery within his stories, by placing them within a time *characterized* by debauchery in society at large. Much of the work involves the

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<sup>58</sup> Note that the numbers in bold indicate de Sade's original pagination. The text in bold indicates quotation taken directly from *120 Days of Sodom*. Note that this style is repeated for the forthcoming section of this work specifically devoted to the text by Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, *Venus in Furs*.

<sup>59</sup> In their work entitled *The Marquis de Sade and the Quest for the Nonabsurd*, sociologists Stanford Lyman and Marvin Scott suggest that for de Sade the rebellious act represents a nonabsurdity. Lyman and Scott offer an operational definition of the absurd: "...the subjective sense that one's established social worlds are hopelessly alien from one's conception of the good, the expected, and the 'normal'. The absurd may be experienced either as a sense that no effective and appropriate norms are available to produce meaning, and the result is a gnawing sense of confusion about the world and events; or it may be experienced as a sense of impotence,, a sense that activities are matters of compulsion, and vehicles of coercive rather than individual expression" (p. 192). Insightfully, Lyman and Scott suggest that the Ancient Regime was giving way to a new republic at the time de Sade wrote his *120 Days of Sodom*, and also that the physical restriction and routinized life experienced through de Sade's repetitive incarcerations within "total institutions" (prisons) became reflected within his work. This author concurs that de Sade's work does, indeed, reflect both the anomic conditions of the transition of government in France during the 18th Century as well as the rationalized and bureaucratized sensibilities of the prison environment. Lyman, S. & Scott, M. (1989). *A sociology of the absurd* (3rd. ed.). Dix Hills, New York: General Hall.

manipulation and inversion of normative hierarchy, for example, in terms of status; those of high status engage submissively with those of lesser status. de Sade describes this kind of inversion as particularly erotically charged.<sup>60</sup>

*Motif of the debauched*

*Motif of communication & documentation*

*Motif of roles*

*Motif of orgy*

**...the celebrated Durcet and the President de Curval, were the first to hit upon the debauch we propose to chronicle, and having communicated the scheme to their friends, all four agreed to assume the major roles in these unusual orgies.**<sup>61</sup>

de Sade introduces the notion of possible elements of relation to others: friendship, collusion / communication, roles, and orgies, within the quotation above.

de Sade indicates that debauchery spreads through communication. It is the notion of contamination which occurs when one debaucher consults another and introduces him to notions which had previously been unconsidered, or at the very least, *unarticulated* to others, in other words, a secret. But by the same token, it is the friendship already existent which acts to initiate the transmission of information, an exchange of ideas, an agreement between two individuals to participate in a plan,

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<sup>60</sup> See Turner, V. The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure. Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell. Of particular interest is Turners chapter entitled Humility and Hierarchy - Status Elevation (pp. 170-172).

<sup>61</sup> The bold text indicates text taken directly from de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. Motifs are generally treated only once. Motifs evidenced in both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch will be treated only once to avoid excessive repetition. Motifs which are evidenced in each work but are treated differently will be elaborated within each section, de Sade and Sacher-Masoch.

and in turn, there is a reciprocal element implied in that the participation and involvement in the plan will strengthen the "friendship".

Roles, social roles, are basic sociological concepts which may be considered a cornerstone to sociological framework. It is interesting that de Sade should indicate a distancing through role. Roles, allow the individual to take a formal stance which may differ from the personal stance, and operate within a role expectation state. Roles gesture to a dramaturgical model such as Goffman's<sup>62</sup>. It implies an enacting of behaviour which is constrained by preset criteria of expected behaviours and attitudes. In this sense, the role in de Sade's work is extant prior to his construction.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly of the four concepts outlined here, is the notion of the orgy. The orgy is a feast of unabashed behaviour. It is relatedness gone wild. It is the realm of chaotic freedom, of normlessness coupled with exoticism, Eros, and frenzy. It is the anomic. It is also the frenzy of the collective. A time of reversal, inversion, replication, creativity. Girard suggests that

...Dionysiac [orgiastic] elimination of distinctions rapidly degenerates into a particularly virulent form of violent nondifferentiation. The abolishment of sexual differences [occurs and there is also a] loss of distinction between man and beast that is always linked to violence<sup>63</sup> (p. 128).

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<sup>62</sup> Goffman, E. (1959). The presentation of self in everyday life. New York: Doubleday.

<sup>63</sup> Girard, R. (1977). Violence and the sacred. (P. Gregory, Trans.), Baltimore: John Hopkins. (Original work published 1972)



The Dionysiac orgy incorporates many aspects which are represented in de Sade's work. As we will see shortly, sexual accentuation and sexual nondifferentiation are both found in de Sade's text. Both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch include considerations of the human animal distinction.

**192 / 193**

*Motif of marriage*

*Motif of whim / desire*

*Motif of secrets*

*Motif of the slave*

*Motif of submission*

*Motif of the tyrant / despot*

*Motif of joy / pleasure*

**...do you think I seek a wife in order to have a mistress? I want a wife that my whims may be served, I want her to veil, to cover an infinite number of little secret debauches the cloak of marriage wonderfully conceals....We libertines wed woman to hold slaves: as wives they are rendered more submissive than mistresses, and you know the value we set upon despotism in the joys we pursue.**

de Sade presents here the reduced status of wife, and indicates a preference for the mistress. It is as though he inverts the notion of marriage as a ritual of joining; the wife is not in relation, but an accoutrement of pleasure. Further, the will of the men is to be obeyed by the women without question. Refusal of request by any of the women involved in the collective enterprise would be met with punishment administered by the men: President de Curval, Durcet, Duc de Blangis, and the Bishop.

A central theme in the work of de Sade is the satisfaction of

desire. The whole of the literary effort is primarily geared towards satisfaction of desire.

The sociology of the secret involves that which is disclosed and that which is hidden. <sup>64</sup> In the discovery of betrayal, that which was hidden is exposed, or discovered. Interestingly, Simmel discusses the dynamic of confession, another element which concerns that which had, hither-to, been kept secret. The Shadow is often the "secret" personality or potential. One may view the secret of the "Other"; one may see one's own secret played out through the "Other". Therefore, the realm of external secrets, "Other"'s secrets, may be regarded as the externalization of the potential for recognition, admission, or livedness, of the secret realm, since the secret is then visible *through* the "Other". Presence and absence suggest the extremes of location. Secrets and confession/ disclosure are the presence and absence of language, of idea, of understanding. The notion of a shared secret may then provide a basis of relation; the two that share a secret may be viewed as a group with a unifying knowledge base that directs interest, or indicates interest.

Another related concept to that of secrecy is the concept of regret in that much of the case study literature on the topic of

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<sup>64</sup> For literature regarding the sociology of the secret see:  
Bellman, B. (1981). The paradox of secrecy. *Human Studies*, 4, 1 - 24;  
Davis, V. (1979). Secret keepers vs. secret leakers. *Society*, 16, (4), May/June, 59-63.  
Redlinger, L. & Johnston, S. (1980). Secrecy, informational uncertainty and social control. *Urban life*, 8, (4), January, 387 - 397.  
Simmel, G. (1964). *The sociology of Georg Simmel*. K. Wolff (Trans. & Ed.). New York: Free Press. (Original work published 1906).  
Warren, C. & Laslett, B. (1977). Privacy and secrecy: A conceptual comparison. *Journal of Social Issues*, 33, (3), 43 - 51.

secrets suggests that secrets are often kept so as to hide acts or omissions which are ego-dystonic to the secret keeper. <sup>65</sup> What is interesting about the concept of regret is that it keeps open conceptual possibilities. While the actual event may have produced some kind of permanent result, the cognition around regret allows the individual to retain or recover some flexibility pertaining to the event, or perhaps to the possibility of reenactment of the event at another time, with other actors. It is rather like an overriding framework which (strangely) makes plastic the lived outcome. The rigid past takes on a kind of softness, a kind of fluidity in the interpreting mind. When moving into the realm of the Shadow, accounts such as excuses or justifications become particularly relevant. While justifications are defined as accounts in which one accepts responsibility for the act in question, but denies the pejorative quality associated with it, excuses differ in that they are regarded as socially approved vocabularies for mitigating or relieving responsibility when conduct is questioned. As Geertz <sup>66</sup> suggests, culture, and the aim of cultural analysis, is to view the

concept of culture [as] essentially a semiotic one. Believing....that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is explication I am after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical (p. 5).

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<sup>65</sup> Landman, J. (1993). Regret: The persistence of the possible. New York: Oxford.

<sup>66</sup> Geertz, C. (1973). The interpretation of cultures. New York: Basic.

Sociology, as a discipline, has traditionally analyzed that which presents as form within culture. The process of analysis rests upon interpretation. Interpretation requires tools (language/manipulation of agreed-upon significant symbols) to make meaningful social action.

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Numerous supper parties were held weekly, each specializing in a particular sensual delight. The first was devoted exclusively to sodomy and was open to only males. Interestingly, the aforementioned four males were attendant in feminine guise. de Sade's characters traverse the role-specific/role-appropriate behaviours and Sixteen males between 20 - 30 were in attendance of these sodomy evenings as well.

*Motif of the well hung*

**These males were selected solely upon the basis of the size of their member, and it almost become necessary that this superb limb be of such magnificence that it could never have penetrated any woman.**

There were in attendance also sixteen younger males between 12 - 18. Contemporary pornography selected models based on their oversized genitalia. Dekkers comments on "supranormal stimulus" as cues to induce sexual arousal: "[men] are constantly in search of extra-full lips, extra-large breasts and extra-long eyelashes" <sup>67</sup> (p. 70). One may add the extra-long cock to the aforementioned list; de Sade had.

*Motif of gender-appropriate role flexibility*

**whose purpose was to assume the office of women.**

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<sup>67</sup> Dekkers, M. (1994). Dearest pet: On bestiality. London: Verso.

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**55-56**

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**UMI**

*Motif of rationalization*

*Motif of order and obedience*

*Motif of desire*

*Motif of the insatiable*

**The company shall rise each day at ten o'clock in the morning, at which time the four fuckers who have not been on duty during the night shall come to pay the friends a visit and shall each bring a little boy....They shall perform as bidden by the friend's likings and desires, but during the preliminaries the little boys shall serve only as a tempting prospect, for it has been decided and planned that the eight maidenheads of the little girls's cunts shall remain intact until the month of December, and their asses shall likewise remain in bond, as shall the asses of the eight little boys until the month of January, at which times the respective seals shall be broken, and this in order to allow voluptuousness to become irritated by the augmentation of a desire incessantly inflamed and never satisfied...**

Murray Melbin's work *Night as Frontier*<sup>69</sup> addresses the notion of night as the negative or "off" period of time, versus day, as "on" time, and the shift of this conceptual framework as normative through the gradual, yet continual erosion of night (as "off" time) by the usage of night time through what had previously been considered day activities, by certain individuals. In other words, night becomes an alternative, rather than an opposite of day, or non-time. But de Sade retains the normative framework of day as activity time, in that one rises at morning, and sleeps at night. The reference to night duty is a reference to the notion of shift work. Yoles and Clair's work entitled *Never Enough Time: How Medical Residents Manage A Scarce Resource*

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<sup>69</sup> Melbin, M. (1987). Night as frontier: Colonizing the world after dark. New York: Free Press.

<sup>70</sup> outlines the expectations of certain individuals whose professional role involves a continuous availability, such as the role of physician. The continual "on-call" status indicates the importance of the position. The shift-work status of "fucker" is a much less desirable condition in that the individual who fills the role is dispensable in and of themselves, and the role itself is key.

The restraint of not doing what one wants to do is an interesting motif as exemplified with the abstinence shown the children who accompany the "fuckers". But the inversion here is not that the children are protected, but rather, experience a greater vulnerability in that the desire to engage them increases with the self-imposed restriction. The notion of not doing what one wants to do is a central theme within de Sade's work.

And lastly, de Sade touches upon the human condition of desire which is continually inflamed, but never satisfied. The underlying principles of late capitalism, wherein the cult of acquisition continually calls the consumer to repurchase, to consume, but not to become sated, but to continually consume, purchase has obvious parallels. Chancer suggests that "the relationship between the capitalist and the worker is analogous to a sadomasochistic one: sadomasochism may be a social fact of life under capitalist systems like that in the United State. Like sadomasochism, U.S. capitalism is based on a conditional form of social psychology that brings severe repercussion....should it be questioned to independently. An excessive form of dependence,

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<sup>70</sup> Yoles, W., & Clair, J. (1994). Never enough time: How medical residents manage a scarce resource. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 23 (2), 185-213.

or social symbiosis, is thereby created” <sup>71</sup> (p. 122). Chancer here is arguing the contemporary understanding of de Sade, wherein the sadist is concerned with the “Other”, rather than the reading presented within this present work, wherein de Sade is specifically concerned with satisfaction, the “Other” representing an accoutrement in the process of satisfaction.

de Sade indicates, or rather, makes reference to an archetypal motif of eternal dissatisfaction, yearning. Contemporary advertising pays homage to such yearning and so one my view de Sade as an author who understood the true nature of being human in relation to desire and yearning. Sacher-Masoch too involves his character Severin in a complex web of impossible yearning which will be discussed later in this present work.

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*Motif of public and private*

**But it is agreed that at [eleven o'clock] there shall be undertaken no secret or private exercises, and that if a moment's wantonizing be desired, it shall be conducted openly and before the public present at the morning meal.**

The blurring of the divisions between public and private are challenged through the sexual debauchery embraced by de Sade and troupe. This section of the work outlines some expectations and restrictions upon diet (i.e. **breakfast consisting of...**) and posturing

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<sup>71</sup> Chancer, L. (1992). Sadomasochism in Everyday Life: The Dynamics of Power and Powerlessness. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.



*Motif of bodily gestures of reverence / veneration*

**(little girls shall adopt the general custom of kneeling at all times whenever they meet a friend, and they shall remain thus until told to stand;)**

Interestingly, the relation between de Sade and the other three "friends" are identified as "friends" and the other relations, regardless of how intimate, are such that the definition of the relations never takes on a "friendship" definition. This indicates that the roles again are fixed, that the occurrence within the framework outlined by de Sade and the "friends" are secondary to the flow of events, and do not impact upon the initial definition of the situation, and the players within the situation. In other words, the roles are allocated, and the relations between, among, those within roles do not impact upon the original outline, and as such, they are static. In fact, much of the outlining of the plan for situation at hand is so rigid that surly boredom would ensue quickly if one were to be held to this regime for very long. Certainly this present author found the incremental shifts in debauché tedious and ultimately repetitive. This could be so for the "victims" of debauchery, but also for the instigators.

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The expelling of bodily wastes (urination) is monitored and controlled by the "friends". The non-friends must excrete in the chapel only, and "delinquents" who fail to comply with expectations and decisions of the "friends". The realm of the chapel is inverted: the sacred space becomes the profane space. Bouissac, while analyzing circus performance, links codes of

nature with food/waste and animal behaviour. de Sade's realm, using Bouissac's considerations, begins to take on more coherence with such a model. The lavish eating ceremonies, respect to the preparers of the food, and expelling the food all take on an animalistic orientation, a (literally) anti-social quality which is, according to Bouissac, the realm of nature <sup>72</sup> (p. 173).

*Motif of penalty*

*Motif of death*

**shall be condemned to suffer the penalty of death.**

Negotiation is out of the question. <sup>73</sup> The relations between "friends" and others is absolutely controlled by "friends". The "friends" rotate monthly responsibility of inspection of non-friends.

Defecation is granted by request to only one third of the non-friends daily. Defecation, as with urination, occurs only in the chapel and is an event in which all four "friends" participate: coprophiles engaging in coprophagy.

The notion of ingesting, or interest with, faeces is considered to be related to one of four generalized areas: First is that of latent infantile defiance toward their mothers who commanded them not to play with it. Second, this strange substance comes from their own body and complete examination has never been permitted. Third, eating faeces can represent ones total and unconditional approval of and submission to a partner; showing love for anything that comes from their body. And

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<sup>72</sup> Bouissac, P. (1976). Circus and culture: A semiotic approach. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press.

<sup>73</sup> For an interesting sociological model pertaining to negotiation see Strauss, A. (1969). Mirrors and masks. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

fourth, it can be a form of masochism or self abasement when one experiences a low point in their life (p.72) <sup>74</sup>

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Considerations of being clothed, or unclothed, are presented, unclothed conditions by some in the presence of others clothed, costumes (*clad as sorceresses*) for some of the entourage. Dekkers mentions that “[a]ll kinds of animals could serve as the helpers of the witch, because Satan was very versatile, but the witch’s familiar *par excellence* was the cat.” <sup>75</sup> Sacher-Masoch’s continual references to Venus with cats and fur suggest witch references.

The idea of clothing is related to modesty, and also to the personal, to represent the personality, indicator of identity . For clothing not to be available is a reduction of not only modesty, but of representation of the individual himself. Indeed, disguise is an interesting progression, deviation, from standard clothing considerations. Clothing can be a key element in self-concept. Consider the Haney and Zimbardo prison experiments wherein role adaptation was extreme and rapid with the acquisition of a few props associated with role enactment of prisoners/guards. The choice of sorceress is a significant one. The sorceress is a form of witch - an archetypal motif of the negative feminine. Negative in this sense does not always mean unfavourable, since frequently in fairy tales it is the witch who offers strategic information or props which assist the protagonist to overcome a

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<sup>74</sup> Love, B. (1992). The encyclopedia of unusual sex practices. Fort Lee, N.J: Barricade.

<sup>75</sup> Dekkers, M. (1994). Dearest pet: On bestiality. London: Verso.

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**63-64**

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model of the “viral”, Baudrillard links the notion of terrorism to the condition of the viral. The viral, like HIV, turns in on itself, attacks violently the host, multiplies, and follows its independent course. The poison of the viral, and here Baudrillard is referring not only to the corporal site, but also the social collective site, “takes hold of a...system when that system rejects all its negative components and resolves itself into a combinatorial system of simple elements” (ibid, p. 63).

In other words, contemporary culture is comprised of a number of unrelated persons, events, products, locales. That they are unrelated means that comparison is impossible as there are no universals against which to measure. Measurement produces value, but without the ability to measure, there is no value, but rather, an unrelated “trajectory” or life which carries all that which is unrelated to some kind of progression, proliferation, continuation. With the continuum, the tension between good and evil broken, as Baudrillard suggests, they become no longer “opposite” but simply exist as independent sites of possibility.

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Language also figures in the notion of storytelling. Storytellers are required to account what will be no doubt lavishly depicted erotic plots. This event acts as catalyst to the friends engaging in actual erotic acts with whom ever they please. This is the realm of the conceptual, the ability to imagine, construct possibilities, and then enact them.

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After the evening meal at 10 o'clock, an orgy begins, all present are nude, including the friends, and end at 2 o'clock in the morning.

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*Motif of the debauched*

*Motif of filth*

*Motif of brutality*

**lascivious ... debauched ... filth[y] ... harsh ... blasphemous...With respect to their tone, it shall at all times be exceedingly brutal, exceedingly harsh, and exceedingly imperious when addressing the wives and the little girls, but wheedling, whorish, and depraved when addressing the men whom the friends, by adopting with them the role of women, should regard as their husbands.**

The notion of distinct roles, fixed and rigid, polarized by sex, gender expectations made most extreme. There is also implicit the idea that sex does not restrict the individual from participating in trans-gendered behaviours. This supports the notion of plasticity of thought giving way to the construction of reality. Further, to behave as if, indicates a number of cognitive processes many of which Mead addressed in his work <sup>78</sup> .

de Sade continues and indicates that fines will be imposed for those who

*Motif of common sense*

*Motif of moderation*

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<sup>78</sup> Mead, G. H. (1977). Mind. In A. Strauss (Ed.), On social psychology: Selected papers. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1956)

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**67-68**

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friends will

*Motif of desire*

*Motif of understanding / knowing*

*Motif of punishment*

**not simply wait for us to specify the orders we would have you execute: a gesture, a glance, often simply on of our internal feelings will announce our desire, and you will be as harshly punished for not having divined it as you would be were you, after having been notified, to ignore that desire or flout it.**

In other words, de Sade indicates an expectation that there will be recognition of agreed-upon symbols, perhaps not even agreed-upon, but the expectation that servants must *virtually anticipate* always, the desires of the friends.

Knowing, in the human sense, presupposes an understanding. Even that which is unfathomable is known, understood to be, incomprehensible. But first, one must “know” that which is unknowable. One may know from perceiving through the senses. Sensate information is processed and understood through interpretation. Interpretation may utilize numerous frames of reference.

The scenario above is not unlike excerpts extracted from historical accounts of slave owners and methods of torture:

The slightest offence was thus constructed to merit the severest punishment.

It almost looked as if he *wanted* the slaves to give him grounds for flogging them...<sup>81</sup> (p. 122).

Also explicitly indicated is the preference for anal, rather

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<sup>81</sup> Ryley Scott, G. (1995). *A history of torture*. London: Senate. (Original work published 1940)



than vaginal, sex. Lore of the devil is that the anus was his realm, the antithetical position to the face.

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There is also a section wherein the females are compared to animals kept for services. And it is here that the reader is cued to the question of clear division between the human and the non-human.

Again, it is stressed that

*Motif of religion*

**anything resembling any act of religion** will be severely punished. Religion appears dangerous within this context in that the direction of worship is moved from the friends, to a spiritual god. But also such interest in universals connects the individual with much more than simply the immediate surroundings, and in a sense, allows a perspective which locates the environment of experience within a larger framework of existence. Without religion, the conditions are recognizable as the only frame of existence for those who find themselves within it. Religion offers hope. In the words of Nietzsche: "religion gives an inestimable contentment with [one's] situation"<sup>82</sup> (p. 263). de Sade's world is founded on inversion, and in some senses it is founded on truth, the brutal truth of forced regard. Hope from the perspective of divine intervention moves focus from the actual to the desired; desire in de Sade's world is reserved for the "friends". Further, the

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<sup>82</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). Beyond good and evil. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). Basic writings of Nietzsche (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

relationship with god may be seen as an always possible relationship, even state of aloneness, a minded relationship. de Sade's friends attempt to thwart even such an interior kind of relationship.

Riley Scott's *History of Torture* indicates similar sensibilities to religiosity:

...[a slave] was punished "for the act of praying"... <sup>83</sup>

(p. 124).

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*Motif of preparation*

*Motif of impurity*

*Motif of antiquity / modernity*

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of nature*

*Motif of crime / transgression*

*Motif of extravagance / extreme*

*Motif of satisfaction*

*Motif of possibility*

de Sade now cues the reader:

**And now, *friend-reader*, (emphasis added) you must prepare your heart and your mind for the most impure tale that has ever been told since our world began, a book the likes of which are met with neither amongst the ancients nor amongst us moderns. Fancy, now, that all pleasure-taking either sanctioned by good manners or enjoined by that fool you speak of incessantly, of whom you know nothing and whom you call Nature; fancy, I say, that all these modes of taking pleasure will be expressly excluded from this anthology, or that whenever peradventure you do indeed encounter them here, they will always be accompanied by some crime or colored by some infamy. Many of the extravagances you are about to see**

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<sup>83</sup> Ryley Scott, G. (1995). A history of torture. London: Senate. (Original work published 1940)

**illustrated will doubtless displease you, yes, I am aware of it, but there are amongst them a few which will warm you to the point of costing you some fuck, and that, reader, is all we ask of you; if we have not said everything, analyzed everything tax us not with partiality, for you cannot expect us to have guessed what suits you best. Rather, it is up to you to take what you please and leave the rest alone, another reader, will do the same and little by little, everyone will find himself satisfied. It is the story of the magnificent banquet...[and] this prodigious variety enlarges the bounds of your choice and, delighted by this increase in possibility....choose, and let lie the rest without disclaiming against that rest simply because it does not have the power to please you.**

de Sade not only cues the reader, he defines the reader: male, literate, affluent (so as to be able to purchase the oeuvre), interested in debauchery and experimentation, as able and willing to be persuaded to step outside normative guidelines and frameworks. But de Sade is also setting the stage. He indicates that the reader is among the chosen "friend" status. He invites the reader into the collaboration and collusion of the debauchery as instigator, not as victim. It is an interesting choice. To allocate the reader to either victim or peer would have been as easy, but as "friend", the reader becomes engaged in the implementation of de Sade's framework. Hence, takes some kind of freedom and responsibility for the enactment of the debauchery.

de Sade indicates that this literary work is extreme, unusual, unparalleled. It is unique to the ancient world, and to the modern world.

Historical context plays a part in interpretation, for example

reference to the ancients and the moderns. Interpretation is influenced by the historical period in which the interpretative process occurs. Present-day models of interpretation are heavily influenced by the model of scientific empiricism. The Enlightenment project sought to replace religious or supernaturally based explanation with rational scientific explanation.

de Sade outlines the intent of the work, to gain pleasure, to gain sexual pleasure. He views the work as a compendium of possibilities. In fact, the entire work is a *possibility* away from (or perhaps harshly revealing) the normative. And he suggests that Nature, the natural realm, is foolish, and not to be found within the work, or if it does, it is complimentary to the debauchery, crime, and infamy, which is to be considered the true focus of the work. de Sade goes on to mention that what may at first appear as repetition within the writing is not, in fact, repetitious, in that there are slight differences, and so de Sade cues the reader to be vigilant to detail, minutia.

**254/260**

The next section outlines character profiles of those characters appearing in the following text. As this is a sociologically oriented text, this section will be omitted since it outlines personality profiles, rather than demonstrating relational considerations.

**Part The First, 263, and Part The Second, 573, comprise the remainder of the work, with the exception of a page entitled**

*Mistakes I Have Made* (which precedes the second section, 570), the Notes, 673, and Addenda, 674. Only the first part is presented in journal format, chronologically, and sectioned by date. It is for this reason that only the first section will be utilized in this analysis.

### **THE FIRST DAY**

de Sade chronicles the first day, embellishing somewhat the rationalized and bureaucratized outline of daily/weekly activities considered earlier in this work.

The socialization process of humans *is* as a restrictive process in terms of limiting and directing behaviour. The uncivilized impulses which are detrimental to the smooth operation of society are negatively sanctioned and desirable attitudes and behaviours are rewarded. At first glance de Sade's characters take delight in moving outside structured frameworks, for example, engaging in orgiastic behaviours. But over the course of the work it becomes evident that the process of "debauchery" in which de Sade's characters engage is rigid and bureaucratized. The debauchery proceeds, becomes increasingly extreme, and moves step-by-step, slowly, with minute changes of scenario; the sexual activity is performed *on* the "Other", then it is executed *by* the "Other", then it is experienced simultaneously with another activity, then it is viewed as two other characters engage in the activity, then age of the social actor is considered: a very young person and a very old person engage in the activity, etcetera.

This description consists mainly of sexual activities and meals. In short, the focus of the introductory material of the first day is corporal, but *through* this focus, an expectation of no close connection is identified. Because the outlined expectation mirrors exactly the executed format of daily structure, this work will skirt the detailed outline and move to the material accounted by the storyteller on the first evening.

266

*Motif of communication / expression / understanding*

*Motif of family ties*

**'Tis no slight undertaking, Messieurs, to attempt to express oneself before a circle such as yourself.**

And while the reader is presented with a biography of the storyteller, it is embellished by demand, in that the first 150 passions (simple passions) must be woven into the biographical history of the storyteller. This embellishment constitutes the rewriting of her biographical history. History, collective agreed-upon memory, seems to be directly related to truth. That which occurred is, apparently, recorded historically. Memory offers a continuity. It situates the individuals who remember within a framework of perceived reality, through the recollection of time/space event. Without the continuity of memory the identity of individuals, or collectives, becomes plastic, uncertain, unanchored, dislodged from the illusion of historical positioning. Behaviour and perception become unpredictable, as the rewriting of history implies a continual option for a variety of referent frames.

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peers.

After a brief interlude, a pause while the friends engage in sexual relations, the storyteller resumes her account.

Interestingly, sex is the event which disrupts routine (briefly).

The next section offered by the storyteller involves yet another monk, Geoffrey. Laurent ejaculates, apparently from being sexually exposed, exhibitionism, which seems (possibly) somewhat more normative (in that sexual events are normatively executed in the nude, exhibitionism obviously involves nudity) compared to Laurent's interest in being urinated upon, and Geoffrey's delight in the consumption of urine. The repetitive use of clergy is but one example of the tedious incremental changes within the work of de Sade.

Another interlude takes place, wherein the friends engage in sexual relations *while* there is a discussion of events described in the storyteller's story. The storytelling is stopped for dinner. The friends eat and sex.

## THE SECOND DAY

Not surprisingly, day two consists of eating and sexual relations. The storyteller resumes her story.

Her story begins with a betrayal motif. Her mother escapes from her marriage, taking with her belongings of value from her husband, the storyteller's step-father. The step-father leaves, and the two sisters are obliged to take lodgings on their own. A note from Father Superior at the monastery informs the sisters that their mother is safe, and that they are to join her. The sisters are



to discretely make their way to the monastery, meet Father Superior, and he will lead them, secretly, to their mother.

The sisters discuss the Father's invitation. The older sister suspects foul play. Further, she is in the service of a Madame, and is profiting rather nicely from this arrangement, although only fifteen years old. She encourages her sister to also come to some mutually advantageous arrangement with Madame Guerin, and declares:

287

*Motif of individualism*

*Motif of the devil / the demonic*

*Motif of advice*

*Motif of hypocrisy*

**...my advice to you is to do what I do. Guerin will take you on....I'll pay your expenses for tonight but from then on don't count on me, little sister. Each for himself in this world. That's what I say. I've earned that money with my body and my fingers, do the same yourself. And if you have any qualms, go talk it over with the devil....[a]s for mother, I don't care what's happened to her....I know all the things she did to prevent me from getting anywhere in the trade, and all the while she was giving me that fine advice, the bitch was doing things three times worse.**

Familial ties are weaker than the responsibility to ensure one's own survival. Loafs and slouches are not welcome. Prostitution is a lucrative trade available to women who wish to live independently. Further, scorn for the mother revolves around hypocrisy.

But immediately following this passage, the sister suggests that they are pretty, payment by men for their beauty will be

forthcoming and allow them a comfortable standard of living.

And some advice:

*Motif of non-attachment / individualism*

*Motif of secret / confession*

*Motif of business*

**...don't become attached to anyone, remember that...there isn't any confessional, or priest, or counsel, or threat that could ruin things for me... you're there to please [men] and give them service; the customer is always right.**

Interesting words from an individual who dismissed her mother for hypocrisy. The sister advocates emotional isolation, rejects emotional connectedness; suggests that her behaviour is beyond control of institution or community, and that one's own desires are secondary to the acquisition of money. Accordingly, the two sisters are installed in Madame Gueirn's brothel.

The notion of voyeurism is introduced within the brothel:

*Motif of the voyeur*

*Motif of taboo*

**...the young ladies found it diverting to watch what men did to their colleagues...**

The passage which follows includes more descriptive of unusual sexual practices which are viewed through the peephole at the brothel. Fetishism, in this case for hair, heterosexual fist-fucking, and anal interest are added to the list of sexual events already outlined: frotteurism, paedophilia, urophelia, coprophilia, anal partialism, telephone scatologia (lewdness) voyeurism, exhibitionism, enjoyment of suffering, enjoyment of inflicting discomfort, transvestitism.

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positions of some of those already in servitude shall decline further. The focus of the chapter is the storytelling event at the end of the day.

This chapter, as with many of the forthcoming chapters, contains little which is novel, which has not already been presented within the work hither-to. That which occurs is, (by contemporary secular standards) mundane (oral sex) or repetitive to that which has been addressed earlier in this work. The storyteller takes up her story after a sex break instigated by one of the friends, and begins:

**Nigh unto two years passed by during which time no one of particular interest arrived a Madame Guerin's; the gentlemen who called either had tastes too ordinary to warrant description, or had tastes analogous to those I have already described...**

Hedralingus (licking the anus),<sup>85</sup> proctotitillia (tickling the anus), and deep kissing (with a focus on the consumption of partner's saliva in great quantity) are also included within the chapter. Dekkers observes:

**Just as seeing saliva or snot provokes ...revulsion - the degree of civilization of a people can be calculated from the number of forests felled in order to make tissues - so the desire to have somebody else's saliva in your mouth counts as a sign of true love...The most intimate contacts between two human beings begins with salivating in each other's mouth. This is called kissing<sup>86</sup> (p. 107).**

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<sup>85</sup> For an especially candid read on the emotional qualities subjectively experienced in conjunction with hedralingus see: Anonymous. (1981). Ass licking. Meat: How men look, act, walk, talk, dress, undress, taste, and smell. (pp. 173). New York: Gay Sunshine Press.

<sup>86</sup> Dekkers, M. (1994). Dearest pet: On bestiality. London: Verso.

## THE FOURTH DAY

312

This chapter begins with the allocation of ribbons to individuals in service of the friends, various colors indicating property rights and ownership by particular friends. While this kind of differentiation apparently outlines ownership the flexibility of partners and the emphasis on transgression is such that the allocation of ribbons is more useful to the understanding of violation (the engaging of another's property, either by force, through secrecy, or deliberate offering rather like a gift) than exclusivity or ownership/segregated availability within relationship. In other words, such a division does not promote hierarchy related to prized possessions but rather promotes a kind of homogenization due to the availability of property to all. One could regard this kind of sharing of property a form of communism.<sup>87</sup>

313

This chapter also introduces the pregnancy of Constance. Interestingly, that she is pregnant allows her exemption from punishments, table service, chastisements, and

*Motif of exception*

**a few other odds and ends that accomplishment of which her state no longer rendered voluptuous to observe, but she was still obliged to appear upon the couches and until further orders to share the bed of whoever wished to choose her for the night.**

That Constance is treated differently due to her pregnancy is

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<sup>87</sup> A notion put forward by G. Paasche

an interesting development in the work. Hitherto no mercy was shown to any of the serving individuals.

315

The storyteller resumes her story, yet no new significant features are evidenced at this time.

### THE FIFTH DAY

At the close of the fifth day comes an unusual twist, even for de Sade:

330

*Motif of age*

*Motif of beauty*

*Motif of dishonour*

*Motif of filth*

*Motif of pleasure*

**The rest of that worn and wasted body - that ass of parchment or ancient leather, that ample, noxious hole glistening in its center, this mutilated tit, those three vanished fingers, this short leg that causes her limp, that mouth destitute of teeth - everything combines to stimulate our libertine pair. Durcet sucks her from in front, Curval posteriorly, and even though objects of the greatest beauty and in the best condition are there before their eyes and ready to brave anything in order to satisfy the least of their desires, even so it is with what Nature and villainy have dishonoured, have withered, it is with the filthiest and least appetizing object our two rakes, presently beside themselves, are about to taste the most delicious pleasures...**

de Sade inverts not only social order, acts, and objects, but also inverts the order of attraction, describing attraction and enactment of sexual liaison with one who is decidedly decayed and unattractive.

Barthes' insights regarding sexuality and nakedness is interesting in regard to de Sade's works which include numbers of naked individuals who are retained for the pleasure and satisfaction of the "friends". Barthes is referring to the eroticism of vulnerability. Nudity may represent vulnerability, and hence, as Barthes argues, be perceived as erotic. Nudity, when erotic, becomes a spectacle for the erotic gaze and the secret *becomes, is becoming* evident. Nudity as composed exposure only offers a starting point to unveil the vulnerable (and erotic) secret; the nudity itself in this instance is not erotic as it is not vulnerable.

Women [and assumedly any individual regardless of gender] is desexualized at the very moment when she is stripped naked <sup>88</sup> (p. 84).

In the work of de Sade, the nakedness which is required of the individuals at the castle who assist the "friends" in their satisfaction works as a desexualization, a further deconstruction of the individual, which, in turn, collapses the relation between the "friends" and "*The Other*", the non-relation between them replaces the structure of relational connectedness.

The classic props of [striptease]....constantly make the unveiled body more remote, and force it back into the all-pervading ease of a well-known rite: the *furs*, the fans, the gloves, the feathers, the fishnet stockings, in short the whole spectrum of adornment, constantly makes the living body return to the category of luxurious objects which surround man with a magical decor (p. 85, emphasis added).

What *is* erotic about de Sade's characters is their awkwardness regarding the behaviours expected of them. Barthes suggests that

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<sup>88</sup> Barthes, R. (1995). *Mythologies* (A. Lavers Trans.). Toronto: Harper Collins. (Original work published 1957)

the awkwardness of beginner striptease -

gauche steps, unsatisfactory dancing [and] technical awkwardness ( the resistance of briefs, dress or bra) which gives to the gestures of unveiling an unexpected importance, denying the woman the alibi of art and the refuge of being an object, imprisoning her in a condition of weakness and timorousness (p. 86).

Barthes insight into the “unprofessional professional” refers to the uncertainty, inexactitude, and tentativeness of newness. The smooth glitz of the professional masks the authentic lived quality of the individual, with the very real imperfections of real lived experience. The flawed brings the individual into the “now” of existence, make living existential, rather than a production of reality not unlike the incredibility of the hyper-credible of contemporary advertising.<sup>89</sup>

#### **THE SIXTH DAY**

This chapter primarily consists of variations, minute variations, of sexual dyadic relation. What becomes evident is that much of the storytelling acts as instruction, or catalyst, so that events described in the stories often occur afterwards, or more precisely, interrupt the storytelling. Motifs of consumption, incorporation, of bodily fluids (semen, menstrual blood, vomit, urine) are repetitively outlined in the Sixth and Seventh days.

#### **THE SEVENTH DAY**

**344**

This chapter opens with considerations, anticipation,

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<sup>89</sup> See Postman, N. (1985). Amusing ourselves to death: Public discourse in the age of show business. New York: Penguin. For interesting sociological critique on contemporary media including advertising.



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descriptions, and the catalogue of atrocities to follow attest to the fact that de Sade was not discrete, and the the lack of literic representation for this particular event gestures not to discretion, but some other criteria for omission. It seems to be a particularly strong indicator that the element of suffering which has come to be recognized as the cornerstone of de Sade's work is *not* strategic to that which de Sade intends to convey. The violations inflicted on "The Other" may be viewed as variations in the preparation of the object /accoutrement which is utilized in the event of sexual satisfaction.

Other points in the work are similarly evasive. In fact, much of the outlining of event within the text focuses not on the discomfort of the victims, but on the enjoyment of the "friends". The *discomfort* of victims is almost incidental. The implication may be drawn that the victims are locked into most unpleasant situations. But the text does not focus on the victim's *response* to such disagreeable events.

Further, it is not that de Sade then continues on a completely fresh line of presentation within the work. Rather, he picks up after having identified that details are not to be forthcoming, and then continues with the description which he has already started prior to the disclaimer regarding the withholding of details. In fact, de Sade does not provide his readers with a detailed account which would *satisfy* his readers. The readers are, like de Sade's human accoutrements, left denied.

*Motif of omission*

*Motif of correction / punishment*

**...yes, we must for the time being omit describing those lubricious corrections...**

de Sade edits. In fact, the characters of the “non-friends” within the work are decidedly vague, undeveloped. Here, de Sade omits the description of the punishment. The pivotal event is absent. The following chapter, the **Eighth Day**, offers the reader great insight into the motivation of the “friends”.

### **THE EIGHTH DAY**

The considerations outlined in the text become somewhat repetitive, and while the content may change incrementally, the descriptions of debauché become monotonous.

The Eighth Day involves, as do several of the previous chapters, the liaison with markedly unattractive individuals. While the men are frequently described as being of senior age, the women are outlined as being repulsive, undesirable, rank. But the men engage with women of such revolting physical qualities with gusto. Hence, the connection with the un-beautiful, the Shadow.

**358**

*Motif of nudity*

*Motif of beauty*

*Motif of disgust*

*Motif of enchantment*

**However, the old girl is naked, and with unimaginable effrontery comes up to offer her lover the sight of and ancient, yellow, and shriveled body, dry shapeless, and unfleshed, the full description whereof, irrespective of**

**your particular fancies in such matters, would so fill you with horror it were better for me to say no more; but far from being disgusted repelled, upset by what greets his eye, our libertine is positively enchanted...**

The social construction of beauty suggest that attraction be directed toward socially acceptable, collectively agreed-upon qualities. Cross-cultural evaluations, as well as changes in the perception of beauty temporally induced, suggest that the notion of "the beautiful" is universal but the qualities which define beauty are transitory and specific to cultural and historical context. That beauty is understood as a construction implies that the qualities perceived as "beautiful" are arbitrary. In this passage de Sade overrides beauty as an indicator to proceed with relations (beauty as an *attractor* to another, to engage socially) and is able to sustain engaging an "Other" without the allure of "beauty".

Religion and the supernatural are explanatory models which precede the scientific model of enquiry and understanding. Enchantment as a referent to the magical control of the environment is antithetical to contemporary considerations and application of science as a model of environmental control and explanation. Sociology, as a scientific discipline, adopts methods of inquiry developed for the natural sciences, and "impartial" researchers seek to develop or discredit hypotheses. However, the scientific neutrality upon which such researchers base their interpretations originates from "just-so" assumptions (von Franz, 1987, p.66). von Franz continues:

Since mathematical forms appear to be the hitherto

single knowable aspect of that unknown Something that we call matter, we have now to ask what these forms are based on. When we do so, we discover that the whole structure of mathematics itself and with it all the equations used by the physicist in the investigation of matter are based on an irrational just-so datum, that is, on *the series of natural whole numbers*, and that they are just-so and not otherwise and cannot be derived from anything beyond themselves.<sup>90</sup>

These assumptions are ancient and couched in contemporary Western cultural validation which elevate scientific method above other ways of investigation and knowing. Because these assumptions are so old, it is easy to forget they are assumptions,<sup>91</sup> and, instead, argue that science is based upon universal and omnipresent founding truths.<sup>92</sup> The “objective”, detached stance of the social *scientist* more effectively eliminates questions and considerations of moral and ethical integrity<sup>93</sup> and concern, than it guards against implicit personal values and attitudes of the scientist surfacing amongst “neutral” data collection and analysis. Again, von Franz writes:

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\* von Franz, M. L. (1987). Projection and re-collection in Jungian psychology: Reflections of the soul. London: Open court. (Original work published 1978) (Original emphasis).

<sup>91</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> For example, inquiry into the medical model of health and illness reveals that medicine as a *scientific* discipline holds a privileged position internationally, even in countries where traditional healing modalities differ greatly from the Western cause-and-effect model of illness. For a more complete treatment of the sociology of health and illness, both scientific and non-scientific healing modalities see:

Brown, P. (1989). Perspectives in medical sociology. P. Brown (Ed.). Belmont, C.A: Wadsworth.

Dossey, L. (1989). Recovering the soul: A scientific and spiritual search. New York: Bantam.

Payer, L. (1988). Medicine and culture: Varieties of treatment in the United States, England, West Germany, and France. New York: Penguin.

<sup>93</sup> Cornell, D. (1992). The philosophy of the limit. London: Routledge.

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**91-92**

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**Mealtime arrived. The Duc wished to advance the thesis that if happiness consisted in the entire satisfaction of all the senses, it were difficult to be happier than were they.**

**The remark is not a libertine's said Durcet. How can you be happy if you are able constantly to satisfy yourself? It is not in desire's consummation happiness consists, but in the desire itself, in hurdling the obstacles placed before what one wishes. Well, what is the perspective here? One needs but wish and one has. I swear to you....that since my arrival here my fuck has not once flowed because of the objects I find about me in this castle. Every time, I have discharged over what is not here, what is absent from this place, and so it is....that according to my belief, there is one essential thing lacking to our happiness. It is the pleasure of comparison, a pleasure which can only be born of the sight of wretched personal, and here one sees none at all. It is from the sight of him who does not in the least enjoy what I enjoy, and who suffers, that comes the charm of being able to say to oneself: 'I am therefore happier than he". Wherever men may be found equal, and where these differences do not exist, happiness shall never exist either: it is the story of the man who only knows full well what health is worth after he has been ill.**

de Sade brings to light the notion of social comparison and expectation states.

**362**

*Motif of aide*

*Motif of comparison*

*Motif of happiness*

*Motif of differentiation*

*Motif of pleasure*

**What? You would not succor the lowly and wretched? exclaimed the Bishop....**

**What is it you term succor? Durcet responded**

**For the voluptuousness I sense and which is the result of this sweet comparison of their condition with mine, would cease to exist were I to succor them: by**

extracting them from a state of wretchedness, I should cause them to taste an instant's happiness, thus destroying the distinction between them and myself, thus destroying all the pleasure afforded by comparison.

Well then, following that, reasoned the Duc, one should in one way or another, so as the better to establish that distinction indispensable to happiness, on should, I say, rather aggravate their plight.

There is no doubting it, said Durcet, and that explains the infamies of which I have been accused all my life.

The friends claim to be engaged, then, in a process of self-validation, self-recognition, a process of differentiation, knowing that which is self, and that which is other. The more radically different the division between self and other, the more facile the recognition process. But one may also read this passage as an excuse for continuing in the debauchery already instigated and enjoyed by the "friends".

Nietzsche suggests too that "[d]ifference engenders hatred"<sup>95</sup> (p. 403). And further

[r]efraining mutually from injury, violence, and exploitation...may become, in a certain rough sense, good manners among individuals if the appropriate conditions are present (namely, if these men are actually similar in strength and value standards and belong together in *one* body). But as soon as this principle is extended, and possibly even as the *fundamental principle of society*, it immediately proves to be what it really is - a will to the *denial* of life, a principle of disintegration and decay<sup>96</sup>

(p. 393, original emphasis).

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<sup>95</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). *Beyond good and evil*. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). *Basic writings of Nietzsche* (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

<sup>96</sup> *ibid.*



363

*Motif of wickedness*

*Motif of the erotic*

*Motif of evil as erotic*

*Motif of pleasure*

**[a] certain wickedness which almost always awakens the organs of lubricity in me; my prick positively jumps when I do evil, in evil I discover precisely what is needed to stimulate in me all of pleasure's sensations, and I perform evil for that reason, for it alone, without any ulterior motive.**

364

To do evil is regarded as erotically charged, the result, the understanding of difference. Evil is connected with crime, since crime is considered an evil act. The greater the crime, the greater the evil, the greater the eroticism.

Nietzsche mentions "the evil who are happy" <sup>97</sup> (p. 240). Nietzsche also declares that "hardness and cunning furnish more favorable conditions for the origin of the strong, independent spirit and philosopher than that gentle, fine, conciliatory good-naturedness and art of taking things lightly which people prize..." (p. 240). Interestingly, Nietzsche gestures to an inversion which, like de Sade, values the harsh over the gentle.

Such an unveiled account of motivation within this text seems to dismiss the notion of *focus* on the devaluation and discomfort of the other, and instead, indicates that the discomfort of "The Other" is incidental to the *pleasure* of the friends.

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<sup>97</sup> *ibid.*

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The absent as negative may be that which has been eliminated. It is related to value in that the criteria used for determining that which is negative is value-laden. In this sense it is entwined with the notion of good and bad, wright and wrong. The negative in this respect is the bad, the wrong.

#### THE THIRTEENTH DAY

#### THE FOURTEENTH DAY

412

*Motif of aloneness*

*Motif of visibility*

*Motif of limit*

*Motif of freedom*

*Motif of desire*

*Motif of god*

*Motif of remorse*

*Motif of guilt*

*Motif of pleasure*

**I am alone here, I am at the world's end, withheld from every gaze, (emphasis added) here no one can reach me, there is no creature that can come nigh where I am; no limits, hence, no barriers; I am free. Whereupon, thus situate, desires spring forth with an impetuosity which knows no bounds, stops at nothing, and the impunity that electrifies them most deliciously increases all their drunkenness. There, 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? and what sway is the conscience to enjoy, what influence upon him who is so accustomed to vanquishing remorse, routing guilt, that so to do becomes for him a game, nay, a little pleasure?**

Historically, those who were judged to be antisocial were

banished from the community.<sup>99</sup> These individuals were condemned to the realm of the absent. Others elected to be apart from the collective. Regardless, the one who is away is absent. Whether by choice or force, the one absent is the one who is *not* with the social. Simmel suggests that "isolation, in so far as it is important to the individual, refers by no means only to the absence of society. On the contrary, the idea involves the somehow imagined, but then rejected, existence of society"<sup>100</sup> (p. 119). David Diekema's article *Aloneness and Social Form* addresses "generic patterns of relation between the individual and community"<sup>101</sup> (p. 481). Diekema suggests that "aloneness is a property of groups or collectivities" (p. 481). Simmel addresses the consideration of isolation and groups:

Isolation thus is a relation which is lodged within an individual but which exists between him and a certain group or group life in general. But it is sociologically significant in still another way: it may also be an interruption or periodic occurrence in a given relationship between two or more persons. As such, it

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<sup>99</sup> Diekema indicates that "understanding....aloneness requires an understanding of its social *form* and the temporal dimensions of the relationships underlying a particular form" (p. 495). Diekema clarifies his emphasis on temporal aspect of aloneness by suggesting that "aloneness is conceptualized in terms of boundary establishment rather than as a mere breakdown or abrogation of relations" (p. 482). Banishment, then, would be an aspect of "other-imposed aloneness, as exemplified in isolation" (p. 482). Further, while Severin is sometimes removed from the presence of Wanda, he experiences isolation, but the relationship is intact, strong, even in the absence of the immediate proximity of "The Other". It is the "state of being cut off" (p. 484).

Diekema, D. (1992). Aloneness and social form. *Symbolic Interaction*, 15 (4), 481-500.

<sup>100</sup> Simmel, G. (1950). The isolated individual and the dyad. In K. Wolff (Ed.), *The sociology of Georg Simmel* (pp. 118-144). New York: Free Press. (Original work published (1906).

<sup>101</sup> Diekema, D. (1992). Aloneness and social form. *Symbolic Interaction*, 15 (4), 481-500.

is especially important in those relations whose very nature is the denial of isolation. This applies, *above all, to monogamous marriage*. ...isolation is not limited to the individual and is not the mere negation of association. It also has a *positive* sociological significance. As a conscious feeling on the part of the individual, it represents a very specific relation to society. And furthermore, its occurrence changes the nature of both large and *very intimate groups*...<sup>102</sup>  
(p. 120).

Simmel indicates clearly that aloneness is not removed from, but rather a relation to, the collective. He perceptively categorizes marriage as a relation in which the individuals involved are necessarily, by definition, entwined and as such, lose distinction through the close proximity which marriage necessitates. James Hollis indicates that contemporary Western culture "as we have contrived it, seems but a divertissement, whose purpose is the avoidance of solitude" <sup>103</sup> (p. 11).

Solitude, suggests de Sade, allows acts to occur which are against the collective values, through the very absence of the gaze of "The Other" (the collective). Boundaries, limits, are ignored, surpassed.

Interestingly, God apparently *does* exist, but the non-believer is able to dismiss the influence of God through disbelief.

Reinhold Niebuhr's *The Nature and Destiny of Man* presents the following passage which is interesting and related to the quote from de Sade above regarding notions of nature and

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<sup>102</sup> Simmel, G. (1950). The isolated individual and the dyad. In K. Wolff (Ed.), *The sociology of Georg Simmel* (pp. 118-144). New York: Free Press. (Original work published (1906) Emphasis added.

<sup>103</sup> Hollis, J. (1996). *Swamplands of the soul: New life in dismal places*. Toronto: Inner City.

freedom:

The hope of modern culture of eliminating human wrong-doing through the political and economic reorganization stands in more or less confused relation with its other hope of eliminating social evil by more individual methods of return to the simple harmony of nature <sup>104</sup> (p. 104).

de Sade shows clearly that the isolated setting of his work in no way is synonymous with the return to romantic primitivism.

Niebuhr continues:

For Rousseau and his followers the way back to nature was the method of throttling and destroying the uniquely human elaborations of nature in the freedom of man. "Retire to the woods," he declared, "there to lose sight and remembrance of the crimes of your contemporaries and be not apprehensive of degrading your species by renouncing its advances in order to renounce its vices." This romantic primitivism....fails to recognize that the freedom of man is the source of all his creativity as well as of his vices (p. 104).

Finally, the motivation for the unseen acts aforementioned is simply pleasure. The emphasis on boundlessness suggests Freud's concept of infantile desires of the id.

## **FIFTEENTH DAY**

**423**

*Motif of taste*

**...the anthology of tastes we are compiling...**

An unusual appellation for the work de Sade produces; an anthology of tastes. The documentation of events is tedious, bureaucratized, rationalized, shifts in behaviours and incidents so

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<sup>104</sup> Niebuhr, R. (1964). The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation. (Vol. 1, Human Destiny). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. (Original work published 1941)

incremental and minute that they *seem* repetitive.

**426**

*Motif of social order / hierarchy as natural*

*Motif of balance*

*Motif of nature as disorderly*

**I maintain that there must be poor in this world, that Nature wishes that such there be, that she requires it, and that it is to fly in the face of her decrees to pretend to restore equilibrium, if it is disorder she wants.**

de Sade reiterates his deterministic stance toward social structure through Nature, that hierarchy is Natural. But de Sade goes much further with his notion when he articulates that Nature *is* disorderly. Contemporary quantum physics theorists<sup>105</sup> have developed frameworks which have the quality of disorder or chaos built into them. The orderliness of the initial scientific models, which gave way to social science replicating natural science models, hence, social order paradigms influencing social theory, shift to models which are sensitive to disorder and chaos. de Sade gesture's to this notion two centuries in advance of the presentation of scientific theoretical models which support his suggestion/ intuition.

**430**

*Motif of gratitude*

*Motif of fondness*

*Motif of social ties / aloneness*

*Motif of crime*

*Motif of generosity / giving*

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<sup>105</sup> For easy reading outlining chaos theory in quantum physics see: Bohm, D., & Peat, F. D. (1987). Science, order, and creativity. Toronto: Bantam. & Zohar, D. (1990). The quantum self. London: Flamingo. For easy reading outlining chaos theory in quantum physics.

*Motif of humiliation / suffering*

*Motif of the soul*

*Motif of benevolence*

*Motif of enemies / connectedness*

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of servitude*

*Motif of social hierarchy*

**...gratitude is nonsense, an hallucination, and that ties of fondness or of any other sort ought never either to make us pause or even to suspend the effects of crime, because the object which has served us can claim no right to our heart's generosity; that object employs itself only in our behalf, its mere presence humiliates a stout soul, and one must either hate or be rid of it....benevolence creates nothing but enemies...it is not at giving you pleasure he who serves you is laboring, but he is rather striving simply to gain an ascendancy over you by putting you in his debt....**

This section articulates a number of considerations central to de Sade's work: relations / connectedness (or lack thereof) and the feelings which stem from such relations (or lack thereof) as well as the social positioning of individuals to each other. Repeatedly throughout the work de Sade calls for individualism, the disregard of established behaviours expected in relatedness, or on a more distant social level of relationship. For example, gratitude, fondness, humiliation all indicate experiential response, feeling; social ties / aloneness, enemies / connectedness, social hierarchy all position the individual against others. Crime and benevolence may be viewed as styles of behaviour which evidence morality.



Both William Miller <sup>106</sup> and Marcel Mauss <sup>107</sup> have published outstanding works on the impact of gift-giving as a tool of power imbalance with the relationship. This is markedly different from the common notion of gift-giving as benevolent gesture. The gift, as a social phenomenon, is understood as a gesture which must be repaid. The receiving of a gift may induce rage on the part of the recipient. This rage may be a result of the inability to repay an extravagant gift, which then indicates not only the lesser status of the recipient, but also the recipient remains in debt to the gift-giver.

The notion of potentiality as associated with Hillman is similar to the understanding of the "Self" in Jung's analytical psychological model. Both these models of potential are, to some extent, similar to the Christian notion of the "soul".

## THE SIXTEENTH DAY

432

*Motif of the value of the experienced / age*

...according to his own words, his discharges were lubricious with no one else, which would corroborate the idea that these matters depend solely upon caprice, upon idiosyncrasy, and that age, looks, virtue, and all the rest have nothing whatever to do with the problem, that it all boils down to a certain tactfulness which is much more often found possessed by beauties in the autumn of life than by those others of no experience whom the springtide yet crowns with all her show.

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<sup>106</sup> Miller, W. (1993). Humiliation: And other essays on honour, social discomfort, and violence. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

<sup>107</sup> Mauss, M. (1990). The gift: The form and reason for exchange in archaic societies. (W. D. Halls, Trans.). New York: Norton. (Original work published 1950)

de Sade indicates that sexual attraction has to do with the mind, with experience, with knowing, rather than visual beauty in the socially constructed fashion. Further, the notion of sexual interests being completely individualized and playful moves away from popular notions of the contemporary sex industry that sex is work, and involves a number of criteria concerning attributes of attraction which one must possess (purchase) in order to be desirable.

**433**

*Motif of evaluation / judgment*

*Motif of nature*

*Motif of perfection / hierarchy*

*Motif of the goddess*

**...and judged hers to be the world's finest ass; and it is certain that Nature had furnished her with one as lovely as that which had been given to Venus.**

Like Sacher-Masoch, Venus is here too, offered as a measurement, a criteria of beauty.

#### **THE SEVENTEENTH DAY**

**453**

*Motif of omission*

**The reader will kindly allow us to suppress the text of Duclos' report, for the architecture of our novel bids us conceal the precise circumstances of what transpired in that remote boudoir...**

Again, de Sade fails to transcribe the details of the horrific sexual deviations to which he alludes.

**445**

*Motif of libertinage as diversion / maintenance of social order*

**The Duc declared he could not understand why in France the law smote so heavily against libertinage, since libertinage, by keeping the citizens busy, kept them clear of cabals and plots, and revolutions; the Bishop observed that, no, the laws did not exactly aim at the suppression of libertinage, but at its excesses.**

de Sade argues <sup>108</sup> that engaging in libertine acts distracts the citizen from undermining the social structure, though it seems that the activities of libertinage are not themselves outlawed, as the Bishop points out (though many of them are certainly illegal) but discouraged in their extremity.

Again Nietzsche is helpful in this enquiry: "immorality is sought exactly and exclusively in what seems dangerous to the survival of the community" <sup>109</sup> (p. 302).

**THE EIGHTEENTH DAY**

**THE NINETEENTH DAY**

**THE TWENTIETH DAY**

**470**

*Motif of imagination*

*Motif of minding*

*Motif of exploitation*

**Well, you know, everything's imaginable and even possible.... [however] I am convinced one can go still further than that....It seems to me that one never sufficiently exploits the possible...**

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<sup>108</sup> This present work takes the content of the works by de Sade and Sacher-Masoch as representing the perspective of the authors. By perspective I suggest that while the characters may or may not represent the sentiments of the authors, the books complete are offerings *from* the authors, and as such, *must be from the perspective of the authors.*

<sup>109</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). *Beyond good and evil*. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). *Basic writings of Nietzsche* (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

But de Sade never reveals to the reader an explanation as the characters in the text whisper to each other in regard to clarifying this particular suggestion. de Sade, by omission, encourages the reader *to imagine*.

*Motif of group secret*

*Motif of omission*

*Motif of modesty*

*Motif of information management*

*Motif of discretion*

**...I believe we would be well advised to keep knowledge of the thing strictly to ourselves, at least in the interests of modesty, for there are an infinite number of things one ought merely to indicate, prudent circumspection requires that one keep a bridle on one's tongue; there are such things, are there not, as chaste ears? one may now and again encounter them, and I am absolutely convinced the reader has already had occasion to be grateful for the discretion we have employed in his regard....**

de Sade, similarly with his mention of courtesy, plays with the inverse notion of modesty.

*Motif of teaching*

**I mention this in passing so that, should any amateur be disposed to make use of the formula, he may firmly be persuaded there is none superior.**

As the storyteller talks about events and the listeners subsequently engage in the events (rather like instruction and enactment) de Sade directly positions the reader as a pupil, the uninitiated who is interested in (or at least drawn to and knowing vicariously) replicating some/all of the activities mentioned within the text. The text becomes a potentially dangerous teaching tool, rather than an escapade in the fictional world of

literature because the structure of hearing / enacting is embedded within the actual text.

Knowing may be transmitted. Teaching may expedite the knowing process. de Sade's model of storytelling and enactment provide a reader with a tangible process of experimentation. The storyteller offers accounts, and the listeners engage in the activities accounted shortly after, or during, the account. The reader of de Sade need not extrapolate extensively from storyteller to enactment *within* the novel, to understanding the material within the novel and experimenting with such relations *in vivo*.

#### THE TWENTY-FIRST DAY

473

*Motif of engaging "The Other"*

*Motif of violence*

**Well, she defended herself very eloquently and to no purpose whatever, for she was not carefully heard...**

Violence as the closure of the dialectic is here clearly articulated. On the next page there is another reference to similar refusals to seriously and authentically engage with "The Other": Traditionally violence has been regarded as harmful attitudes or behaviours. Violence, it has been argued, may manifest either physically or psychically.

The closure of the dialectic arena is violent. To arrest completely the communicative process is the most severe violence. The collapse of the realm of engaging with the "Other" is operationally defined as violence. Physical violence is regarded

as the complete reduction of the interlocutive space, which is replaced by the declaration of location by the actor of violence. Therefore, physical violence represents a position of the continuum of relationship: engaging with the "Other" in a way that is receptive and join the individuals who engage in consideration which entertains possibilities represents one polarity on the continuum, the non-violent polarity. It is the *connection* between divergent possibilities represented through "Others" which constitutes the creative realm, the transcendent realm. Moving away from this central ideal is the situation wherein the participants are in close proximity, but unable to truly engage with the "Other". Intimacy is unfulfilled in that participants present considerations, but do not *hear* the "Other"; hearing the "Other" is not a sensate ability, but rather a cognitive ability. The situation wherein participants articulate the refusal to hear the "Other" precedes the stage of physical violence wherein the interlocutive process arrests completely, which represents another polarity on the continuum of violence. Notice that contemporary understanding of suffering is such that, utilizing the model of violence above, suffering frequently increases as connectedness and exchange between individuals decreases.

474

*Motif of common-sense*

**But [he] was having to deal with people who were deaf to common-sense arguments.**

Not only is the dialectic closed, but the content resting on common-sense, on the agreed-upon sense of the collective is discarded. One may be reminded of the "common sense revolution" slogan of the Conservative political party in Ontario.

**475/476**

*Motif of aide*

*Motif of familial ties*

*Motif of disgust*

*Motif of happiness*

*Motif of the absurd*

*Motif of misfortune*

**Why do you want to go to see that old woman?...  
Why, don't you see? said Lucile, whose heart was still undeveloped,  
there are certain things that one is expected to do . . . I ought to help her if I can, and above all if she turns out to be my mother.  
Idiot, I muttered, thrusting her away from me, go sacrifice alone to your disgusting popular prejudices....And what matters it to you....whether that creature be happy or wretched? Does her situation have anything to do with yours? does it affect you? Get rid of those demeaning ties whose absurdity I've just proven to you, and thereby isolating this creature, sundering her utterly from yourself, you will not only recognize that her misfortune must be a matter of indifference to you...**

de Sade introduces through his characters a severe argument against human ties, particularly against the ties of family. So too Nietzsche argues: Not to remain stuck to a person - not even the most loved - every person is a prison... <sup>110</sup> (p. 242). The argument that relational ties are to be dismissed in favour of individualism

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<sup>110</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). *Beyond good and evil*. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). *Basic writings of Nietzsche* (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

appears antithetical to the collective values of contemporary society, yet contemporary critics of culture like Christopher Lasch<sup>111</sup> and William Henry III<sup>112</sup> argue that individualism at the expense of collective values is rampant.

477

As outlined by the storyteller:

*Motif of disorder / health & illness*

**There was a man....[with] a disorder of the mind which surpasses all that words are able to convey...**

There is a strange implicit perspective here from the rational world, that the behaviours, the debauchery, are manifestations of a *disorder of the mind*. Interestingly, in order to understand disorder, one must be aware of that which is not disorder. de Sade indicates that the normative framework underlies his work. Both Scheler<sup>113</sup> and Goffman<sup>114</sup> present theoretical frameworks wherein the social actor understands his position and behaviour in relation to related, yet different, definitions / understanding / interpretive frameworks.

*Motif of faith (religion)*

*Motif of law*

*Motif of horror*

*Motif of charity*

**...he had neither faith nor law, no god and no religion,**

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<sup>111</sup> Lasch, C. (1991). The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations. New York: Norton.  
(Original work published 1979)

<sup>112</sup> Henry, W., III. (1994). In Defense of Elitism. New York: Anchor.

<sup>113</sup> Scheler, M. (1994). Ressentiment (L. Caser & W. Holdheim Trans.). Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Marquette University Press.  
(Original work published 1915)

<sup>114</sup> Goffman, E. (1974). Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.



**and was above all else endowed, like yourselves, Messieurs, with an invincible horror of what is called the charitable sentiment...**

de Sade's characters, presented via the storyteller, appear without institutional constraints vis-a-vis their behaviour, and further, "friends" are loath to call upon feelings or values of consideration for "The Other".

This chapter's storytelling focuses upon the infliction of deliberate physical and psychological discomfort of a mother and daughter. The family again comes under de Sade's attack, and the notion of a deliberate inducement of discomfort for the gratification of another is introduced. Previously, discomfort seemed to be a secondary product, the satisfaction of the sexual actor the primary focus. de Sade appears to be increasing the extremity of the scenarios both through the stimulus required to achieve sexual gratification, and also with the numbers of actors involved in the specific scenarios. Insult and humiliation, and the melting of candle wax onto genitalia all figure in this chapter as sexual behaviours. Miller suggests that

We understand certain emotions to be more emotional than others. These are the emotions that tend to be accompanied by acts of violence or obvious somatic disturbance. That is, rather strangely, we most easily see emotions in others when their display engenders in us either fear or embarrassment <sup>115</sup> (p. 94).

Still, the other is merely an object for satisfaction. de Sade is interested in satisfaction. He approaches satisfaction by utilizing

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<sup>115</sup> Miller, W. (1993). Humiliation: And other essays on honour, social discomfort, and violence. Ithaca: Cornell.

a model of satiation. In this respect, his considerations are a scientific model of satiation; the organism engages in activities which *satisfy*. de Sade's characters are presented as having unlimited hormonal resilience and endurance; they never tire. Because the model is concentrated on the satisfaction of the "friends" or the powerful male in the storyteller's stories, the focus is indeed, upon the friends. The "Other" who is available in the direct assistance of satisfaction (sexual) is almost inconsequential. Several times throughout the work the actual events are not discussed; the reader is left to imagine the atrocities which are implied. But this omission is significant. If de Sade's focus is on the discomfort of the "Other" it seems unlikely that these points of extreme discomfort would be omitted. However, de Sade finds it sufficient to indicate that the individual engages in activities which produce a discharge, i.e., sexual gratification.

Codified law coupled with informal normative understanding produce, together, a comprehensive outline of boundaries and expectations which societal members are expected to understand and follow. The aforementioned quote refers to the complete absence of such restraint and indicates the individual who rejects such constraining frameworks allows freedom which transgresses such frameworks.

#### **THE TWENTY-SECOND DAY**

The twenty-second chapter is unusual in that it is brief compared to the preceding chapters, and the significant events

which de Sade outlines are chronicled in a condensed fashion, with different events synopsisized in brief paragraphs. This style of account foreshadows the journal-style format of the following sections of the work: Part the Second: The 150 complex Passions (571); Part the Third: The 150 Criminal Passions (597); Part the Fourth: The 150 Murderous Passions (625).

## **THE TWENTY-THIRD DAY**

**493**

*Motif of insult*

*Motif of hierarchy*

*Motif of inversion*

*Motif of ecstasy*

**...dared him to do his worst, insulting him in his own turn....The more vile....lowly....survey....the more filthy his boot, the more overpowering would be my client's ecstasy.**

The storyteller conveys a situation involving humiliation from the lowly, inflicted upon the aristocratic. Again the motif of order through bureaucracy is evidenced. Repeatedly, verbal insult plays a greater role in the storyteller's account. The significance of the manipulation of significant symbols (language) becomes increasingly important. The negative is conveyed not only symbolically through act, but also symbolically through word.

The motif of hierarchy is implied throughout the work of de Sade. His concern with hierarchical order, inversion of the order, and the revaluing of order is a repeated theme in the work. It is, in fact, one of the core motifs identified in de Sade's work. Max

Scheler's work entitled *Ressentiment* offers a theoretical model of how such moral inversion may occur. The term "ressentiment" is helpful in terms of explaining de Sade's inverted world.

Ressentiment is an incurable, persistent feeling of hating and despising which occurs in certain individuals and groups. It takes its root in equally incurable *impotencies* or weaknesses that those subjects constantly suffer from. These impotencies generate either individual or collective, but always negative emotive attitudes. They can permeate a whole culture, era, an entire moral system. The feeling of resentment leads to false moral judgments made on other people who are devoid of this feeling. [Impotencies causing resentment] can be psychic, mental, social, or physical...disadvantages, weaknesses, or deficiencies of various kinds. The individuals and groups concerned suffer from a blockage to communicate with others.

Any feeling of resentment stemming from the impotency in a resentment-subject is accompanied by hidden feelings of self-disvalue over against others....Feelings of resentment...are irritated by the *unattainability* of positive values that others represent....There is always present in resentment a disorder of the heart....that is, resentment is a state of constant aberration from the order of values, from the order of feelings and of love in which acts values are first given, i.e., from the "ordo amoris" or the "ordre du coeur"<sup>116</sup> (Frings in Scheler, p. 7, original emphases).

Scheler recognizes the values experienced by humans beginning with the order of the heart, the realm of love, connectedness. The projection of negative feelings onto others who possess positive qualities desired by the individual experiencing

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<sup>116</sup> Scheler, M. *Ressentiment*. (L. Coser & W. Holdheim, Trans.). Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Marquette University Press. (Original work published 1915)

ressentiment, in terms of the Shadow, indicates that the recognition of positive Shadow elements occurs also through the projection itself. In this sense, as Scheler suggests, it is the positive elements, undeveloped in the individual, which are recognized in the "Other" through projection. While the elements are indeed positive, the model of Shadow as unlived, cut-off aspects, undeveloped in the individual, remains intact; it is the value of the repressed or cut-off aspects which is, in this case different from the usual model of the Shadow. Another significant aspect of the model of resentment put forward by Scheler is the insight that the inverted value order which is generated through resentment feelings comes to be internalized as

Scheler refers to "*an ordre du coeur and a logique du coeur...which the moral genius gradually uncovers in history, and it is eternal - only its apprehension and acquisition is "historical."* *Ressentiment* helps to subvert this eternal order in man's consciousness, to falsify its recognition, and to deflect its actualization <sup>117</sup> (p. 53, original emphases).

Scheler argues a universal moral code which is actualized through history. Further, resentment distorts the recognition of this universal moral code. Scheler recognized the social actor as interpreter of meaning, but suggests that actor's decisions (morally) may be measured by some "eternal" moral code. The individual who experiences resentment continually falsifies the world view "in order to justify his inner pattern of [resentiment]

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<sup>117</sup> Scheler, M. *Ressentiment*. (L. Coser & W. Holdheim, Trans.). Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Marquette University Press. (Original work published 1915)

value experience" (p.55). Importantly, such falsification of world view can lead way to a perverting of "the *sense of values* itself", and the resentment feelings "disappear" and are replaced with "good" and "pure" conscious feelings. "He is delivered from hatred, from the tormenting desire of an impossible revenge, though deep down his poisoned sense of life and the true values may still shine through the illusory ones". Indeed, the "automatic process of forming recollections, impressions, and feelings is involuntarily slanted, so that conscious falsification becomes unnecessary...The apprehension of values follows this pattern, to the point of their complete reversal. The value judgment is based on this original "falsification." It is itself entirely..."genuine"...for the value it affirms is really felt to be positive (p. 56/57). This is particularly interesting in terms of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch, both of whom suggest radically different moral value systems, and both of whom endorse such, as Scheler would argue, "inverted" systems (inverted form the eternal moral value order), because their resentment has reached a stage wherein the resentment order has come to be regarded *as* the eternal moral value order. If this is so, we may regard the perspective of both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch as being inverted resentment moral perspectives.

**496**

*Motif of degradation*

*Motif of punishment*

*Motif of paradox*

*Motif of enigma*

*Motif of "The Other" and relationship*

**...the state of degradation which characterizes the situation in which you place him when you punish him, pleases him, amuses him, delights him, and inwardly he relishes the self that has gone so far as to merit being treated in this way...**

**Oh, what is this glory, jest, and riddle of the world! sighed the Duc.**

**Yes, my friend, an enigma above all else,...[a]nd that perhaps is what led a very witty individual to say that better every time to fuck a man than to seek to comprehend him.**

The paradox of desire, of behaviour, of positive with negative, are indicated within the aforementioned quote. The latter part of the quote instructs the reader to avoid engaging intellectually with "The Other" and rather to seek a relation based upon sexual gratification only; this is another example of de Sade's continual devaluation of "The Other" and of avoiding exchange with "The Other" in a meaningful way.

## **THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY**

**500**

*Motif of intimacy & affection*

*Motif of women as property*

**But, my dear wife, I ought perhaps to begin by informing you I have never had any feeling whatsoever for a woman, and assuredly fewer for you, who belong to me, than for any other.**

Here is another reference to the devaluation of traditional social structure (e.g. the family), and the notion of women as owned by the husband, and women as property.

**...there you have an individual who wishes to make himself familiar with the idea of death, and hence unafraid of it, and who to that end has found no better means than to associate it with a libertine idea.**

de Sade presents the idea of preparation, familiarization, with the feared, the unfamiliar. Further, the sexualization of such a process of familiarization, seems to make the process of familiarization more palatable; the fear of negation is overcome through the sexualized process of enacting that which is feared. Interestingly, within the storyteller's account of a man who requested a sexual act (ostensibly) upon his death bed, the reader is offered insight into the method of dying which was normative at the time. 118

The idea of familiarization or rehearsal with unknown elements is an interesting method of the acquisition of understanding. It is in some ways similar to Mead's notion of minding, though Mead's minding has to do with the experimentation of problem solving as an exercise in thought. de Sade suggests that enactment, physical enactment, involving the exploration of unknown areas, is an effective way in becoming acquainted with the unfamiliar.

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118 For details in attitudinal shifts towards death see: Aries, P. (1974). Western attitudes toward death from the middle ages to the present (P. Ranum, Trans.). London: Johns Hopkins.



**508**

*Motif of regret*

*Motif of self-interest*

*Motif of breaking trust*

*Motif of violation*

*Motif of honour*

*Motif of mass transgression*

**We deeply regret not yet to be able to explain all this to the reader, but it is quite certain that these gentlemen, on the sly before arrival of the day heralding open season, were giving themselves over to tricks which have not so far been embodied in story, hence to unsanctioned deeds, and in so doing they were acting in formal violation of the regulation they had sworn in honor to observe; but, you know, when an entire society commits the same faults, they are commonly pardoned.**

de Sade articulates that issues of morality and ethics are evidenced through the social collectivity; in effect, de Sade indicates that it is satisfactory (for example, within a democracy) that if the majority wish to engage in unethical and immoral behaviour, because then, the behaviour is not statistically deviant.

## **THE TWENTY-FIFTH DAY**

**510**

*Motif of emotion*

*Motif of forgiveness*

*Motif of transgression*

*Motif of punishment*

*Motif of codification*

**They did as they were told, with much blushing and not a little weeping, and asked to be forgiven their mistakes. But too attractive was the prospect of having**

**that pretty couple amongst the culprits to be punished the following Saturday; consequently, they were not forgiven, but were speedily included in Durcet's book of sorrows which, incidentally, was being very agreeably filled up that week.**

de Sade implicitly offers the reader repeated scenes of futility, of request and denial.

**514**

*Motif of torture*

**There's truly no believing that point to which that fellow would carry his furor; he had to be given a sample of almost every torture.**

While contemporary understanding of de Sade, especially by those who have *not* studied the work, tends to focus on the concept of torture, this is the first reference to it within *120 Days of Sodom*. Further, the reference is from the storyteller. Edward Peters suggests that torture is "the inquiry after truth by means of torment"<sup>119</sup> (p. 1). Perhaps the torture evidenced in de Sade's works reveals a truth *via* his characters about the world of the social, rather than evidence of truth of the characters specifically. Metaphorically, we may read the wilful participation in the event of torture as the wilful engagement of the pursuit of truth. As such, may the reader regard de Sade's work as a text of *truth*? And if so, is truth then simply reduced to another accoutrement of pleasure and satisfaction? While torture may be regarded as the process by which an individual is forced to admit that which cannot be admitted, de Sade's "Other" is so inconsequential that their confession is also inconsequential. It is the torture, the

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<sup>119</sup> Peters, E. (1985). *Torture*. Oxford, U.K: Basil Blackwell.

punishment which is key.

## THE TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

522

*Motif of fire*

**I make no bones about the fact I love the idea of watching fuck burn.**

de Sade begins to write frequently, at this point, of images of burning and fire. Bachelard's work entitled *The psychoanalysis of fire* is an interesting work applying symbolic analysis to the element of fire.<sup>120</sup> Symbolically fire may represent a number of considerations. Often fire may be viewed as the "fire of eternal damnation", the fire of punishment, the state of discomfort and arrestation. Other times it may be regarded as the "fire of transformation" since heat/fire is the condition which *transforms* matter.

## THE TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY

530

*Motif of obedience*

*Motif of pleasure*

**...bear in mind that, alive though you may be, you are only so in order to obey and to let be done to you what we please.**

Here the motif of obedience is clearly demonstrated, coupled with the notion of violation, mentioned earlier in this work. Further, throughout the book the reader becomes aware of increasing intensity, increasing numbers of characters described

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<sup>120</sup> Bachelard, G. (1964). *The psychoanalysis of fire* (A. Ross Trans.). Boston: Beacon. (Original work published 1938)

within scenes, increasing numbers of debauched acts linked within scenes, increasing extremities; the motif of escalation is evident throughout the work. It is as though de Sade comments on the very nature of satisfaction and desire by gesturing to a continual increase, escalation.

531

*Motif of autoerotic asphyxiation*

**Moreover, his pleasures' impressions would be measured by the method of execution, a hanging produced little more than an exceedingly mild sensation.**

Autoerotic fatalities, autoerotic activities in which potentially injurious agents or activities are utilized to heighten sexual arousal, <sup>121</sup> often involve asphyxiation. Coe lists elements frequently found associated with death accidentally induced through autoasphyxia:

Participants are almost exclusively male, usually young, and predominantly caucasian. Only a single case of a female involved in such a death has so far been reported in the entire world literature.

The majority are naked or only partially clothed with genitalia exposed. There is frequent evidence of penile engorgement and ejaculation. While seminal emission has been reported in asphyxial deaths of any type, this author has found this very infrequent in true suicidal hangings.

Over half the cases have features of bondage with hands, feet, and / or body tied in some fashion. Not infrequently the hands are fastened behind the back which may cause inexperienced investigators to regard the death as a probable homicide.

In many cases (over 50% of the author's series) the scene reveals that the victim was viewing himself in a mirror during the fatal act.

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<sup>121</sup> Hazelwood, R., Dietz, P. E., & Burgess, A. (1983). Autoerotic fatalities. Toronto: Lexington. (p. ix)

Salacious literature, articles of feminine apparel, and varying degrees of transvestism are common. Adornment of the genitalia and shaving of pubic hair represent other manifestations of the auto-erotic sexual aspects found at the death scene.

The mechanism of producing asphyxia will usually be some contrivance that permits the victim to control the degree of anoxia without producing any marks on the body. Thus the presence of padding on a rope used in hanging is strong evidence for an accidental death rather than suicide <sup>122</sup> (p. 173).

This present author finds autoerotic asphyxiation interesting in that the polarities of sadomasochism as understood in contemporary culture appear to be experienced, and played out, by the same individual; the victim and the violator are one. Mead's central theoretical consideration of humans being able to "take the role of the other" here becomes an interesting ability vis-a-vis sadomasochism, self-understanding, and behaviour. The autoerotic asphyxiative event may be understood as the vacillation of perspective (involving erotic suffering) between victim and violator within a single individual; each role is taken alternately. As Freud points out (as quoted earlier in this present work) the sadist and masochist perspectives are (both) to be found *within* the individual. <sup>123</sup>

532

*Motif of horror*

*Motif of sexual arousal*

*Motif of opinion*

*Motif of relativity*

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<sup>122</sup> Coe, J. (1974). Sexual asphyxias. Life-Threatening Behavior, 4 (3), 171-175.

<sup>123</sup> For a discussion on masochism and sadism in connection with autoerotic asphyxia see Dietz, Burgess, & Hazelwood Autoerotic Asphyxia, the Paraphilias, and Mental Disorder (pp. 77-100). in Hazelwood, R., Dietz, P. E., & Burgess, A. (1983). Autoerotic fatalities. Toronto: Lexington.

**Oh....one has got to learn how to make the best of the horror; there is in horror matter to produce an erection, you see, and the reason is quite simple: this thing, however frightful you wish to imagine it, ceases to be horrible for you immediately it acquires the power to make you discharge; it is, hence, no longer horrible save in the eyes of others, but who is to assure me that the opinion of others, almost erroneous or faulty in every other connection, is not equally so in this instance. There is nothing....either fundamentally good, nor anything fundamentally evil; everything is relative, relative to our point of view, that is to say, to our manners, to our opinions, to our prejudices. This point once established, it is extremely possible that something, perfectly indifferent in itself, may indeed be distasteful in your eyes, but may be most delicious in mine; and immediately I find it pleasing, immediately I find it amusing, regardless of our inability to agree in assigning a character to it, should I not be a fool to deprive myself of it merely because you condemn it?**

de Sade writes in the vein of the symbolic interactionist.

Interpretation is reality; reality through subjective interpretation is relative. Further, to avoid that which is pleasurable because of social pressure, social disagreement in value of the activity, object, is foolish.

While keeping the Symbolic Interactionist perspective of interpretation close at hand, the realm of the negative becomes evidenced only through interpretation. As such, the negative may be that which is absent and has never been, or that which is removed, that which was with and is now no longer with. In this regard, the negative becomes relational. It is less focused on the value of the negative, though of course this is involved,

particularly in the removal of the negative, the second condition outlined above, because value is the differentiating quality which suggests to the actor reasons for inclusion or rejection.

Scientific *and* humanist inquiry, self-reflection, the process of understanding, of discovery, analysis, and meaning, has fundamentally to do with *interpretation*. Interpretive sociology, versus traditional sociological approaches, is concerned with how social actors come to understand themselves and the situations in which they find themselves. In the words of Herbert Blumer:

...human beings interpret or "define" each other's actions instead of merely reacting to each other's actions. Their "response" is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions. Thus, human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions <sup>124</sup> (p. 180).

Since social actors find themselves not in a vacuum, but in society, meaning is acquired *through* the interpretive process. The self and "Other" become understood through interpretation within social interaction. The ability to manipulate sophisticated linguistic symbol systems greatly enhances such understanding. It is a conscientious point within scientific inquiry (psychology, psychiatry, biology), philosophy, theology, sociology, that *only* humans have the capacity to engage in reflexive introspection.

Noël Carroll puts forward an interesting model of "art-horror" <sup>125</sup> which has value when transported into the realm of

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<sup>124</sup> Blumer, H. (1969). Symbolic interactionism. Englewood Cliffs, N.J:Prentice Hall.

<sup>125</sup> Carroll, N. (1990). The philosophy of horror: Paradoxes of the heart. New York: Routledge.

inquiry here; the components of art-horror are as follows:

...I am occurrently art-horrified by some monster X, say Dracula [or perhaps an individual purporting to be bisexual] if and only in 1) I am in some state of abnormal, physically felt agitation (shuddering, tingling, screaming, etc.) which 2) has been *caused* by a) the thought: that Dracula [bisexuals] is a possible being; and by the evaluative thoughts: that b) said Dracula [bisexual] has the property of being physically (and perhaps morally and socially) threatening in the ways portrayed in the fiction and that c) said Dracula [bisexual] has the property of being impure, where 3) such thoughts are usually accompanied by the desire to avoid the touch of things like Dracula [bisexuals].

(p. 27)

Traditionally the notion of orgiastic sexuality as outlined by de Sade has often produced an emotional response of agitation by those not involved in sexual activities, through the *existence* of individuals who do engage, and that sexual flexibility, engagement, threatens moral, social, and physical wellbeing, coupled with the response that sexuality is to be carefully controlled, and sexuality like that which is presented by de Sade is to be avoided, not touched either physically or intellectually as a possibility. de Sade himself, using this model, can be regarded as horrifying, similarly, his writings also take on a horrifying aspect. Interestingly de Sade himself discusses "horror".

533

*Motif of crime as the denial of sexual pleasure*

**Nothing's villainous if it causes an erection, and the single crime that exists in this world is to refuse oneself anything that might produce a discharge.**

de Sade's moral code is clearly spelled out here, relative to



traditional moral codes. The continual expansion of contemporary capitalist markets may be regarded similarly; commodity fetish (excitement, an 'erection') induces an urgency for acquisition - the item must be had, and denial (not to purchase) is a crime (going against normative codes of action).

#### **THE TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY**

**537**

*Motif of the Goddess*

**The mysteries of Venus were, as we know, often celebrated....**

Venus, goddess of love, is mentioned.

#### **THE TWENTY-NINTH DAY**

**545**

*Motif of satiation*

**There is a proverb - and what splendid things proverbs are - there is one, I say, which maintains that the appetite is restored by eating. This proverb, course, nay, vulgar though it be, has none the less a very extensive significance: to wit, that, by dint of performing horrors, one's desire to commit additional ones is whetter, and that the more of them one commits, the more of them one desires.**

de Sade indicates the condition of insatiability which is generated by engaging in the attempt to satisfy desire.

**547**

*Motif of reason*

*Motif of restraint*

**Reason prevailed, however, he kept a grip upon himself and did not even discharge.**

Though rare within de Sade's writing, this passage indicates the possibility of restraint, delay of gratification, and ability to

uphold subcultural agreements. Loewy states: "Appealing to reason is, in a sense, an appeal to the authority of reason"<sup>126</sup> (p. 30) and further, we "cannot have feelings which somehow do not involve or even originate in what we understand by the concept "reason": having feelings about something or some situation implies at least some sort of right or wrong understanding"<sup>127</sup> (p. 54). If Loewy is correct, then de Sade's acceptance of reason, even in his world of transgression makes sense in that actions are always open to moral evaluation.

552

*Motif of human / animal division*

*Motif of obedience*

*Motif of humiliation*

*Motif of degradation*

**...never did the dogs do me any harm; on the contrary, they seem to be having a good time playing and to be amused by me, quite as though I were a dog too.**

**That's enough, said the gentleman, You've worked hard enough; it's time to eat.**

**He rang, a servant entered.**

**Bring some food for my animals.**

**And a moment later the servant returned, carrying an ebony feeding trough which was filled with a kind of very delicate chopped meat. He set the trough on the floor.**

**Very well, the gentleman said to me, get down and eat with my dogs....**

**there was nothing for me to reply; I had to obey. Still on all fours, I plunged my head into the trough; the trough was very clean., the food very good, I fell to munching away beside the dogs, which very politely moved over, leaving me peacefully to my share. And that was the critical instant for our libertine; the**

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<sup>126</sup> Loewy, E. (1997). Moral strangers, moral acquaintance, and moral friends: Connectedness and its conditions. Albany, N.Y: State University of New York.

<sup>127</sup> *ibid.*

**humiliation of a woman, the degradation by which he reduced her, wonderfully stimulated his spirits.**

de Sade eroticizes the question of the animal/human division. Masson suggests that anthropocentric attitudes are erroneous and non-human individuals have interpretive capabilities unlike humans, yet none-the-less effective.<sup>128</sup> Since a full understanding of the differences and similarities between human and non-human animals is still so limited, contrary to the weltanschauung of information advancement and sophistication, this present author suggests that one must remain attitudinally open to notions and ideas which seem strange, that present themselves in glaring contradiction to established and accepted frameworks, or cornerstones, of contemporary understanding. In the words of Gadamer:

...the specific problem that the human sciences present to thought is that one has not rightly grasped their nature if one measures them by the yardstick of a progressive knowledge of regularity. The experience of the sociohistorical world cannot be raised to a science by the inductive procedure of the natural sciences.<sup>129</sup>

So the established scientific method of inquiry is, according to Gadamer, insufficient when applied to the study of humans and human interaction.

Interpretation presupposes a consciousness which processes that which is external or, in the case of self-reflection, that which is internal. In either case, that which is defined is the material

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<sup>128</sup> Masson, J. (1995). *When elephants weep: The emotional lives of animals*. New York: Delta.

<sup>129</sup> Gadamer, H. G. (1996). *Truth and method* (J. Weinsheimer & D. G. Marshall, Trans.). New York: Continuum. (Original work published 1960)

for interpretation.

Alger and Alger's work entitled *Beyond Mead* "Symbolic interaction between humans and felines" argues that Mead's model of symbolic interaction may be applied to non-human individuals. They focus on the distinction between "practical goals" wherein minding (problem solving) is aimed at "survival, comfort, and other utilitarian problems associated with living"<sup>130</sup> (p. 70) and "social goals". Non-linguistic symbols of solidarity may be understood by individuals during interactions.

For such natural interaction rituals to be established... at least two participants in the same location....focus attention on the same object or action, and are aware that each other is maintaining this focus [while] sharing a common mood or emotion. The mutual focus of attention and the common mood create a shared reality in which the participants feel like members of a little group, with moral obligations to one another. Their relationship becomes symbolized by whatever they focused upon during their ritual interaction. Subsequently, when they use these symbols, they have a sense of group membership (p. 70).

Interestingly, the Meadian model of symbolic interaction is now being questioned in terms of the strict division between human / non-human which Mead initially drew. While Mead's model has been traditionally applied to humans, interpretation of Mead's work, as outlined above, accounts for symbolic interaction between humans and non-humans.

554

de Sade narrates several erotic stories via the storyteller.

These stories involve situations wherein the storyteller

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<sup>130</sup> Alger, J., & Alger, S. (1997). *Beyond Mead: Symbolic interaction between humans and felines*. *Society and Animals*, 5 (1), 65-81.

reaccounts her past as a whore. In the story she finds herself involved in scenarios set up by her client. She is not aware that the *outline* of the scenarios differ from the *enacting* of the scenarios; she anticipates the full enactment of the aforementioned outlines. The scenarios include her death. In fact, she is released, and paid, just at the point in the scenario wherein she is to be executed.

## THE THIRTIETH DAY

561

*Motif of evil*

*Motif of seduction*

*Motif of exploitation*

*Motif of lack*

[His] passion is to lead into evil as many girls and married women as he is able, and apart from the books he employs to seduce them, there is truly no sort of device he will not invent to deliver them up to men; he either exploits their secret yearnings by uniting them with the object upon whom they only think longingly, or he finds them lovers if such they are lacking.

Seduction, betrayal, revenge, and escape are *ways* of relating. They are motifs of relation or relationship, frameworks of sociability. There is a kind of linear quality to the motifs when viewed on a continuum; as a whole, seduction may lead to betrayal, revenge sought, and escape necessary. But this is a simplification, and the complexities and possibilities associated with these motifs are replete.

The motif of seduction often has to do with two (or perhaps more) actors engaging in interplay in which sincerity of motive,

and presentation, may or may not differ radically. Part of the confusion/attraction to the world of seduction is the uncertainty between sincere and insincere motivation. Seduction has to do with the tension between wanting and not-wanting, simultaneously. As such it is related to the notion of desire.

Yearning and frustration can be erotically charged, as Sacher-Masoch makes clearly evident in his work *Venus in Furs*. But for Sacher-Masoch, the yearning has to occur within relationship.

There is a quality of enticement, and to a certain extent, receptivity, in the motif of seduction. Goffman's book entitled *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*<sup>131</sup> provides a model of transposition, similar to that of musical transposition, which details how actors can engage in behaviours which shift as quickly and as intensely as the multiplicity of stance which may be found within the seductive encounter.

Goffman writes:

[T]he key...[may be defined as] the set of conventions by which a given activity...already meaningful in terms of some primary framework, is transformed into something patterned on this activity but seen by the participants to be something quite else. The process of transcription can be called keying. A rough musical analogy is intended.<sup>132</sup> (p.44)

From a sociological perspective, seduction may offer social actors the option of engaging in scenarios of relation which move outside socially defined normative structures/ expectations/

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<sup>131</sup> Goffman, E. (1974). Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

acceptability. Conversely, should actors begin outside normative frameworks, seduction may provide a frame to draw in the statistically deviant process, and reframe it in socially normatively identifiable terms. Seduction is interesting in that it has to do with a complexity of interpretation. In this regard we may view seduction as the eroticization of uncertainty, since the realm of seduction necessarily has to do with the manipulation of intention and face, presentation and motive. Offerings to the relationship may be sincere, or may be theatrical and disguised. Further, we may add the notion of competition; seduction is the eroticization of competitive uncertainty.

How then, is such a tenuous style of relation so appealing? Perhaps the very notion of uncertainty is crucial. Quantum physics presents chaos theory as a feasible alternative to scientific certainty. So too, seduction presents a model of uncertainty, chaotic, if you will, which displaces the traditional model of romantic love, and functional heterosexual dual-gendered relations. In short, the embracing of chaos within the vanguard of quantum physics may be viewed as an acceptable (cultural) entry port into the world of the Shadow. The chaos of the realm of the Shadow is not absent within the model of rational and predictable causally-based science. It is simply ignored, or considered an anomaly.

The *uncertainty* of the seductive model may provide a loophole of responsibility to the actor. The metaphor of seduction, of being tricked into action, or tricked into complicity,

may allow the actor to jettison responsibility. But the metaphor of seduction, may be a coping strategy (the denial of responsibility) for the seduced, the victim of seduction.

The notion of victimization is also strategic to the model of seduction: one hopes to overcome, overpower, or to reduce the "Other" into revealing the desired position. Certainly the aggressor (s) may ultimately desire to *be* overcome, rather than to overcome.

Let us consider seduction as the *willingness* to be overcome, to be whisked away to the lair of the one who seduces. To be seduced, the seducer must be attracted (somehow, on some level) to the seducee. This attraction is the flip side of desire - the seduced is desired - hence - desirable. One is confirmed by seduction that one is prized. And yet one wants more than to be only a commodity. There is an element about romance which has to do with being special. Part of romance is that one becomes identifiably special to someone else, and that the "Other" too, presents unique qualities.

In contemporary Western culture victims are numerous. The media churn out victim after victim. Amato states: "An uninterrupted parade of images of distant victims as chosen and shaped by the media appear before us" <sup>133</sup> (p. xx). One dreads becoming the victim, and yet, there is a compulsive attraction to viewing the victim. The ambivalence with which one approaches the victim, comes proximate, imbues the relation with a kind of

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<sup>133</sup> Amato, J. (1990). Victims and values: A history and a theory of suffering. New York: Praeger.



danger. Danger has always been interesting. Those secure become dormant, but those fearful and in danger live vitally. Seduction is a construct in which one may be allowed to "live dangerously" in a way that is regulated, safe, and ultimately secure; a "frame of reference" which guides behaviour, and yet the frame of reference gestures to the veiled, the chaotic, the unplanned, the spontaneous.

The one who says "no" is always most attractive.<sup>134</sup>

Perhaps the responsibilities of boundary maintenance become too great. Wouldn't it be a relief not to have to continually maintain boundaries? In such a consideration, seduction may be welcome. Plath offers insight into seduction with the following excerpt from *The Bell Jar*:<sup>135</sup>

The more I thought about it the better I liked the idea of being seduced by a simultaneous interpreter in New York City. Constantin seemed mature and considerate in every way. There were no people I knew he would want to brag to about it, the way college boys bragged about sleeping with girls in the backs of cars to their room-mates or their friends on the basketball team.... When Constantin asked if I would like to come up to his apartment to hear some balalaika records I smiled to myself. My mother had always told me never under any circumstances to go with a man to a man's room after an evening out, it could only mean one thing. "I'm very fond of balalaika music," I said

(p.83/84).

Betrayal as motif has to do with authenticity and trust. The dyadic relationship, in which one is betrayed by the "Other", is perceived only one-sidedly as authentic, since betrayal is

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<sup>134</sup> Paasche, G. Informal conversation 1997.

<sup>135</sup> Plath, S. (1963). *The bell jar*. London: Faber and Faber.

intrinsically related to deceit. Other related conditions: shame, humiliation, despair, anguish and pain are also related to this topic. Betrayal has to follow insincerity. Being "duped" by the "Other" may involve feelings of embarrassment. As Miller indicates, "Embarrassment usually involves a sense of exposure and conspicuousness, coupled with an awkward concern for what others are thinking of us" (p. 38). But significant to the concept of embarrassment is the inclusion of the audience. The idea of being observed by others, being evaluated, and being evaluated negatively.<sup>136</sup> The one betrayed may resort to revenge.

Revenge is an act of retaliation *by* the indignant, of retribution, or repaying a wrong, though not necessarily "righting" a wrong. It is especially laden with emotion.<sup>137</sup> So too are the other motifs, since life itself is an emotional experience, and to dismiss emotional experience in sociological inquiry does a great disservice to the field of sociology and social psychology.

Revenge is especially interesting because it by nature involves calculation and execution. The reader is here cued to the necessity of language in the process of understanding the future, of anticipating outcomes within the minding of problem solving. Agreed upon meanings become the basis for self reflection and understanding. Both the vengeful, and the victim, may seek refuge in escape.

Escape is less emotional, and more accurately located after

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<sup>136</sup> Miller, R. (1996). Embarrassment: Poise and peril in everyday life. New York: Guilford.

<sup>137</sup> See Ellis, C. (1991). Sociological introspection and emotional experience. Symbolic Interaction, 14 (1), 23 - 50. for the significance of emotion in sociological inquiry.

the recognition of desired flight. It hearkens to the binary responses of fight or flight. Miller has an interesting suggestion related to the experience of horror. He suggests that horror is fear-laden disgust. To address the horrific means the risk of contamination through confrontation, which is problematic regarding the fight response. Flight is equally problematic in that the fear element of this type of disgust causes panic and immobility.

The Shadow may be viewed as a realm of potential, evil may be regarded as a motif of thwarting of potential. <sup>138</sup>

That which is absent, unacknowledged, repressed, ignored is usually undeveloped. When things are undeveloped, they are, particularly in contemporary Western society wherein style and presentation are honed to great extent, particularly in product and personal presentation, greatly contrasted in their rough-edgedness. In a cultural context such as ours in Western urban centres, the Shadow may connect the individual with his <sup>139</sup> essential, basic, limited and finite humanness. It may represent potential, a direction in which the psychic energy of the individual, as yet completely unconscious, wants to go. The Shadow is the undeveloped part of the personality, the un-lived potential which is inherent within the individual, as Hillman

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<sup>138</sup> Butcher, D. (1994). Evil thoughts: A potential redefinition. Unpublished manuscript, York University, Toronto.

<sup>139</sup> While this author is sensitive to gender-neutral vocabulary, for the purpose of graceful writing, the masculine pronoun will be utilized throughout this work, rather than egalitarian yet awkward constructions such as he/she, etc.

suggests in his work *The Soul's Code: In Search of Character and Calling*.<sup>140</sup> Also, the Shadow is manifest in the collective, as it is in the individual case, and may also indicate all that which is unconscious. Nietzsche's following passage does not, by name, refer to the realm of the Shadow, but refers to the essence of the Shadow:

We opposite men, having opened our eyes and conscience to the question where and how the plant "man" has so far grown most vigorously to a height - we think this has happened every time under the opposite conditions, that to this end the dangerousness of his situation must first grow to the point of enormity, his power of invention and simulation (his "spirit") had to develop under prolonged pressure and constraint into refinement and audacity, his life-will had to be enhanced into an unconditional power-will. We think that hardness, forcefulness, slavery, danger in the alley and in the heart, life in hiding, stoicism, the art of experiment and devilry of every kind, that everything evil, terrible, tyrannical in man, everything in him that is kin to beasts of prey and serpents, serves the enhancement of the species "man" as much as its opposite does<sup>141</sup> (p. 244).

Nietzsche argues for the Shadow, indicating that the elements which comprise Shadow are indeed useful in the development of humans. We may view the Shadow in relationship to the "Other". Important are not the qualities outlined above but rather Nietzsche's sensitivity to joining the extremes. It is the process of withdrawing the extremes which is strategic in Shadow

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<sup>140</sup> Hillman, J. (1996). *The soul's code: In search of character and calling*. New York: Random.

<sup>141</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). *Beyond good and evil*. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). *Basic writings of Nietzsche* (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

work.

Relations which suppress natural components of the complete range of relational possibility generate Shadow energy, suppress the Shadow elements of the individual into unconscious awareness. When elements are suppressed and become unconscious, they become somewhat dangerous in that they go unrecognized by conscious perception, and thereby become autonomously enacted.

568

*Motif of reward / recompense*

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of gentleness*

*Motif of exception*

**With these words, the superb Duclos [the storyteller] respectfully saluted the company, bowed, and descended from her throne....Supper was served, Duclos was invited to sit at the table, a favor which had never before been accorded to a woman. Her conversation was quite as agreeable as her storytelling had been, and by way of recompense for the pleasure she had given them, [the friends] named her to be the governor-general of the two harems and the four friends also made the promise, in an aside, that no matter what the extreme treatment to which they might expose the women in the course of the sojourn, she would always be dealt with gently, and very certainly taken back with them to Paris, where the society would amply reward her for the trouble she had gone to in order to help the [friends] procure themselves a little good cheer.**

This closing section to the first section of 120 Days of Sodom, The Simple Passions, is strangely contrary to the outline of the rest of the section. de Sade shows compassion, exception for the storyteller Duclos. It is evidenced that she will be exempt

from the maltreatment of women as a reciprocal gesture for her contribution to the enjoyment of the friends. This is absolutely antithetical to that which was articulated in regard to social ties earlier in the work, and as such, perhaps points the way to relationship, offers a window of possibility, of hope.

An interesting consideration for this kind of exception may be understood as *the rewarding of those who actively participate in the construction of their own biography*. While most of the individuals available to the “friends” are manipulated by the “friends” (against their will) the storyteller is unique in that she constructs the biography she offers; it is she who has the freedom to create (add, delete, embellish, falsify, fabricate) and present her personal history. And while she is constrained by the expectations of the “friends” she does relay a constructed history for the purpose of entertainment. Reward, then, occurs when the social actor purports to be autonomous, even in situations which are clearly oppressive and rigidly defined by others.

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**UMI**

# von SACHER-MASOCH

## VENUS IN FURS

This edition of *Venus In Furs*, the Rahngild Edition, 1932, is interesting in that it begins with

*Motif of absence*

**nine blank pages,**

the tenth displays only the title of the book, two more blank pages follow. The thirteenth page offers the first of four illustrations to be offered within the text. It is entitled

*Motif of bodily gestures of reverence and veneration*

**...the Shrine.**

and depicts a naked male, head bowed and kneeling<sup>142</sup> in front of a female figure. Her face and right breast, exposed; her hair stylized as long wisps. She is located behind two symmetrical candles housed in elaborate holders. His face is left blank; no features are represented. Instead, the head, with the exception of the hair, is left void of any distinguishing features. Her body is as stylized as her hair, indistinguishable, with the exception of the head and right breast, from any human semblance. It is this image which guides the reader to the text.

The absence of written introduction, forward, index, conveys a quality of stark immediacy. A kind of unembellished

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<sup>142</sup> "The various physical postures also express and communicate humility, surrender, and abandonment - postures such as the folding of arms, the clasping or joining of hands, bowing, kneeling and prostration, all these convey nonresistance, submission, yielding, obedience and renunciation" Gordon, R. (1989). *Masochism: The shadow side of the archetypal need to venerate and worship*. In A. Samuels, (Ed.), Psychopathology: Contemporary Jungian Perspectives. London: Karnac. (Original work published 1987)



quality which is to be also forthcoming in the style of the text itself. And yet, the blank pages which precede, and follow, the title page suggest a space which actively does *not* offer embellishment, adornment, anything lavish. The representation of the blank pages makes more evident the *absence* of embellishment, than if the pages had been absent, and the work had begun immediately, on the first pages of the book itself. The pages offer a place, a space, where things are *not* to be found.

The title *Venus in Furs* indicates a number of entry points, for example, Venus as Goddess, and as such a reference to mythology, hence, the archetypal, in the Jungian sense. Venus as planet, the obvious pun of the “heavenly body” but also the notion of another planet, a place distant, colder than earth, but a *real* place which is Other than our known place, earth. Bakhtin writes of the “grotesque body” and the value of laughter in response to the inversion and ambivalence (“terror is conquered by laughter” <sup>143</sup> p. 336; “the symbols of fear [are] defeated by laughter” <sup>144</sup> p. 394; “Rabelais continually used the traditional folklore method of contrast, the ‘inside out’, the ‘positive negation’ <sup>145</sup> p. 403) connected with the carnivalesque (where the grotesque body is celebrated, for example “pregnant old age and birth-giving death <sup>146</sup> p. 405). His insights into Rabelais may be

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<sup>143</sup> Bakhtin, M. (1984). *Rabelais and his world* (H. Iswolsky Trans.). Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press. (Original work published 1965)

<sup>144</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> *ibid.*

applied to the realm of de Sade. But Bakhtin cautions the reader and identifies that “[t]hat which stands behind negation is by no means nothingness but the ‘other side’ of that which is denied...”<sup>147</sup> (p. 410) and as such may be read as the acknowledgement of Shadow. Like the positive nature of the Shadow, “the principle of laughter and the carnival spirit on which the grotesque is based ....frees human consciousness, thought, and imagination for new potentialities”<sup>148</sup> (p. 49). But the positive elements of the regenerating carnival imagery, the grotesque body, and laughter can be reduced.

In the private sphere of isolated individuals the images of the bodily lower stratum preserve the element of negation while loosing almost entirely their positive regenerating force. Their link with life and with the cosmos is broken, they are narrowed down to naturalistic erotic images<sup>149</sup> (p. 23).

Perhaps one essential difference between de Sade and Sacher-Masoch is the attitude toward the negative by the characters within the works; while de Sade’s characters engage the negative “positively” the characters in Sacher-Masoch eliminate the positive qualities of the negative. de Sade’s characters are a collective wherein all individuals, friends and “Other” engage in the “debauche”, Sacher-Masoch’s dyad/triad are microcosmic and reject the positive element of the negative, evidencing only the erotic.

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<sup>147</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> Pomorska, K. (1984). Forward. In Bakhtin, M. (1984). Rabelais and his world (H. Iswolsky Trans.). Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press. (Original work published 1965)

<sup>149</sup> *ibid.*

The original work written in German is entitled *Venus im peltz*, however, the English translation offers the reader an unexpected connection of wording - the title may be phonetically read as *Venus infers*. The notion of communication through significant symbol systems, namely, language, and the complexities of such a system, for example, conversational implicature, will be a consistent thread throughout this work. In fact, the notion of inference, the cognitive jump from symbol to meaning, by or from one, *to* another, is strategic to the very process of this inquiry within this work. The process of thick description has to do, partly, with inferring that which the author intended, concretely: that which the author wrote, but also perhaps did *not* intend on a conscious level. The realm of intentionality becomes complex when addressing not only conscious (overt) but also unconscious (covert) intentions. Meaning and interpretation also becomes somewhat more complex taking into account the unconscious realm.

The oeuvre consists of twenty-three chapters. There are no titles to the chapters other than by numerical reference. The numbers of chapters ascend chronologically from one to twenty-three.

## CHAPTER I

7 The opening line of the book is significant in terms of the symbolic interactionist approach to interpretive sociology:

*Motif of relation to "Other"*

*Motif of enchantment*

**I found myself in company most enchanting.**

Sacher-Masoch begins with the notion of *finding one's self*. In order to find, to discover, something must be *unavailable*, either lost, or unknown. Significant to this notion is the framework of conscious and unconscious, that which is, or is not, consciously known.

The insight into the possibility of finding one's self requires the ability to reflect upon one's own self. For one to know that they are in some sense absent or otherwise unavailable, and that through reflection, they are able to view the self as object., Subject and object are one and minding, in the Meadian sense, requires the ability of the human to engage in thinking of self as both subject and object.

The notion of company, the realm of engaging with the "Other" is related to the notion of self reflection as self and object in that self and "Other" operate in a similar, yet more complex, manner.

And lastly, the notion of enchantment. A somewhat unpopular notion vis-a-vis the current weltanschauung of the scientific as primary contemporary explanatory model. Cause and effect are basic in our world-constructing processes. Enchantment

has to do with clarity of perception, with being used by others for their own gain at the expense of the enchanted, cast under a spell, and so will is at stake, enchantment can also be referenced to the spell of love, to be overcome by desire, to want. The world of enchantment, of "wonder", has been usurped by the scientist.

Visano discusses superstition, which is related to enchantment, and argues that "superstition demands deference to authoritative "others" who define difference as inherently dangerous" <sup>150</sup> (p. 336). One may read the notion of enchantment as a foreshadowing of danger, a nonrationalized, nonscientific model of explanation.

Conversely, Taylor discusses disenchantment in the Weberian sense: "the dissipation of our sense of the cosmos as a meaningful order, has allegedly destroyed the horizons in which people previously lived their spiritual lives" <sup>151</sup> (p. 17).

The implication of the narrative voice in the past tense also implies that the narrator of the story is a survivor. The psyche responds to psychic events; that the survival is of a dream, perhaps, in no way diminishes the importance and influence of the events psychically. The reaccounting is that the protagonist has escaped any peril which may be henceforth described. The past tense narrative is safe, they *have* survived.

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<sup>150</sup> Visano, L. (1997). *Dracula as a contemporary ethnography: A critique of mediated moralities and mysterious mythologies*. In C. Davison (Ed.), *Bram Stoker's Dracula: Sucking through the century, 1897-1997* (pp. 331-350). Toronto: Dundurn.

<sup>151</sup> Taylor, C. (1994). *Source of the self: The making of the modern identity*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. (Original work published 1989)

*Motif of opposite*

*Motif of the feminine*

*Motif of war / enemy*

*Motif of virility*

*Motif of goddess*

*Motif of authenticity*

*Motif of emotion*

**Opposite me, by the massive Renaissance fireplace, sat Venus: not a vagrant woman of the demi-monde, who under this pseudonym wages war against the enemy sex, like Mademoiselle Cleopatra, but the real, virile goddess of love.**

Here we see that there is a figure "opposite" and as such Sacher-Masoch brings into play the notion of opposites, polarities, and continuums of representations. von Franz writes of the opposites addressing the Shadow:

...as long as the attitude of the ego is powerfully engaged in life...it can hold the opposite together. There are always phases where one is filled with life and the problem of the opposites is not so acute; one knows one has a shadow and there is always a plus and a minus, but somehow the opposites do not bother one much. Then, for some reason, the ego gets stuck, loses its possibilities and its creative ability, and the opposites fall apart and all sorts of conflicts arise<sup>152</sup>  
(p. 35).

von Franz indicates that the Shadow is related to the opposites and to balance.

The large fireplace may be viewed symbolically. Fire as a motif is rich in symbolism. And here by the large fire, the fire of transformation or the fire of eternal damnation, the writer sits

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<sup>152</sup> von Franz, M. L. (1974). Shadow and evil in fairytales. (2nd ed.). Dallas: Spring.

with a Goddess, a true Goddess, Venus, the archetype of love. Significant is the notion of authenticity: this is the **real Venus**, and so not only issues of authenticity, but also considerations of reality, and what is reality, and what is not are implied. Significant too is the wording of **war against enemy sex** which suggests that heterosexual relations are metaphorically structured like war. Relations are antagonistic between the sexes, the polarities of sex and gender are extreme and exclusive to the point that the "Other" is regarded as **enemy**.

As Sacher-Masoch engages Venus, he notes that her eyes are both **white and dead stony**. Indeed, her head and **tiny feet** are the only parts of her **marble-like body** which are visible to him as the rest is shrouded in furs. Venus, it seems, is as unfeeling as a rock, cold, and almost inanimate.

Feet symbolically refer frequently to the standpoint, as it is the feet upon which one *stands*.

Venus is compared to a trembling cat. The cat symbolically may refer to the instinct, the instinct which is still connected to the independence of the instinctual realm. This is unlike the dog, who has shifted from an independent instinctual condition, to an instinct in the service of humans. Dekkers declares that of the 10 most popular animals, "the only really sexy animal in the top ten is the cat"<sup>153</sup> (p. 61). Dekkers continues:

Until recently the deepest wish of every woman was to own a fur coat and in some countries it still is. Enveloped in an animal skin you looked not only more coquettish, but strangely more sophisticated.

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<sup>153</sup> Dekkers, M. (1994). Dearest pet: On bestiality. London: Verso.

The higher the society, the nearer the proportion of ladies with fur coats approaches 100 per cent....Now people wear fake fur. But that is just as effective. Wearing an imitation leopardskin dress a woman transmits an unmistakable message, which was actually intended for male leopards but strangely enough works as powerfully on human males <sup>154</sup>  
(p. 112).

Interestingly, the powerful male who appears later in the work is referred to as "the lion" and may be viewed as the "king of the jungle" the pinnacle of the feline hierarchy.

*Motif of understanding / comprehension*

*Motif of temperature  
(environmental)*

**I don't understand it I complained. It isn't really cold any longer. For the two weeks**

Interpretive sociology in the manner of Mead and Blumer provides a theoretical framework which explains how humans come to understand, to make meaningful the world. Blumer clarifies:

The term 'symbolic interaction' refers, of course, to the peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings. The peculiarity consists in the fact that human beings interpret or 'define' each other's actions instead of merely reacting to each other's actions. Their 'response' is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions. Thus, human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions <sup>155</sup> (p. 180).

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<sup>154</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> Blumer, H. (1969). Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall.



*Motif of cause & effect*

**past we have had perfect spring weather. You must be nervous.**

Introduced here are concepts of complaint, cold (and by implication, hot), and nervousness (by extension apprehension and fear). Sacher-Masoch views his environment and tries to make sense of the components which he senses. A distinctly human activity, he tries to make meaningful interpretations. Complaint has to do with disagreement, with engaging "Others" who have differing definitions of the situation. It has also to do with the ability to problem solve, and anticipate various conceptual outcomes, outcomes which differ from the present condition or starting point/ referent point.

Hot and cold are related to life and death, fast and slow, gentle or mean, kind or unkind. They are binary opposites and suggest a continuum of behaviour between the two extreme points.

The idea of nervousness induced by the natural environment is discussed and the difference of response by sex is considered.

*Motif of nature*

**I believe that was Nature's intention.**

Revealing that Nature is intentioned, designed, and operates as an entity. Nature is referred to with the feminine pronoun "she":

*Motif of secrets & confession*

**...has Nature made you *her* confidante.**

The reader may view the two feminine aspects already introduced within the text as components of the larger feminine whole: Nature, and Venus, the overseer of the earth and earthly order, and the divine feminine goddess of love, of relationship, of romance, of engaging. And so too the notion of taking into confidence, confiding, of engaging, of telling secrets, and the telling of secrets is necessarily linked to the act of confession, of purging the weight of the secret, of joining into the collective with knowledge, through knowledge and information.

Nietzsche recognizes nature as being : "wasteful beyond measure, indifferent beyond measure, without purposes or consideration, without mercy and justice, fertile and desolate and uncertain at the same time"<sup>156</sup> (p. 204). The similarities between the goddess and Nietzsche's remarks on nature are striking.

*Motif of transgression*

*Motif of temperature (as indicator of relational indicator)*

*Motif of presentation*

*Motif of authenticity*

**Now you wrong us, I protested. Interiorly, we northerners are really warm. Yes, I know, we look cold. But that is merely an attribute we take over - by natural mimicry - from our landscape which, especially at this time of the year, is as cold as it is fine and tender.**

The concept of wronging another, to do the "Other"

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<sup>156</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). *Beyond good and evil*. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). Basic writings of Nietzsche (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

disservice, to engage in the realm of the negative begins this paragraph. Considerations of interior and exterior are also evident. And the concept of authenticity versus presentation, or in the words of Diane Arbus: "The gap between intention and effect".<sup>157</sup> How others read us, the line and face we take, and whether we take a line we intend, one which truly represents us. Also, the impact of the environment on the individual and hence, the nature of the social relationship between those indigenous and those from without. By implication one may consider ethnocentrism, cultural diversity, and the exotic unknown qualities of the distant "Other".

9

#### Questions and consideration of

*Motif of emotion*

**...what love is**

are brought forward in this next section. Further, the goddess Venus articulates that she becomes ill with a cold each time she comes to visit. This indicates that the goddess, out of her natural territory, becomes ill. Parson's and others<sup>158</sup> have done extensive work on the sick role and the sociology of health and illness. Further, the interplay of hot and cold imagery in this opening section of the work is such that the implication is that when out of her natural environ, she loses the warmth which is natural to

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<sup>157</sup> Arbus, D. (1972). *An aperture monograph*. Millerton, NY: Doon Arbus and The Estate of Diane Arbus.

<sup>158</sup> Parsons, T. (1975). The sick role and the role of the physician reconsidered. *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, 53, 257-277.

West, C. (1989). Talcott Parsons' 'sick role' and its critiques. In P. Brown (Ed.), *Perspectives in medical sociology* (pp. 145-152). Belmont, C.A: Wadsworth.

her, she becomes cold.

**9/10**

The reader is guided through a recollection of the first meeting between Venus and Sacher-Masoch. Key to this interaction is the statement from Sacher-Masoch:

*Motif of the divine*

*Motif of the  
godly/ human/ animal division*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of emotion*

**You are a divine woman, but nevertheless a woman,  
and like every woman cruel in love.**

Sacher-Masoch is keenly aware of power relations within his work. The divinity which he attributes to Venus represents a hierarchical division between the divine and the mortal, the human. So too the references to animals, and fur, indicate a sensitivity to the division between human and the other members of the animal realm. The divine, the human, and the animal, are related, but separate, and ordered.

Throughout Sacher-Masoch's work characters are allowed to display emotion. Questions of love and hate, connectedness and distance, relationship and relatedness are brought forth.

Sociological inquiry has been concerned with how society is possible. Sacher-Masoch provides commentary on individuals, together, and how notions of intimacy may be quite contrary to the normative script of heterosexual romantic dyadic bliss. At various points the characters of Severin and Wanda declare their "love" for each other, yet the style of relations, the demands

made, indicate desire is constituted in ways which may be quite removed from the idyllic.

10

However, in response to the appellation of cruel, Venus counters with the following quotation:

*Motif of passion*

*Motif of pleasure*

**What you call cruel, the goddess of love replied eagerly, is simply the element of passion motivated by natural love, which is woman's nature and makes her give herself where she loves, and makes her love everything that pleases her.**

Here Sacher-Masoch indicates that the element of cruelty within relationship is, in fact, natural. Further, the *natural* constellation to the relationship is the notion of "pleasing". Such deference to the "Other" appears to be the basis for the imbalance of power found within the "cruel and natural" relation between the sexes. Indeed, deference and conceding seems antithetical to the normative social structure of success and acquisition common in contemporary Western urban centres in North America. On the other hand, one may consider the realities of the world versus the understanding of the world. It may be that while cruelty which is rejected in contemporary culture theoretically can be found should one take the time to unveil it.

Again, Venus refers to pleasure as a prime ordering principle of behaviour:

*Motif of duty / social responsibility*

*Motif of pleasure*

**You talk of duty where there should be only a question of pleasure.**

Certainly a strategic element within the questions considered by sociologists is the notion of obligation, duty, service to the collective, versus private gain or desire, i.e. pleasure.

Venus articulates a remarkable insightful passage which addresses the dichotomy of paganism and Christianity. She mentions **moderns**, individuals who differ from the traditionalists. As Mills suggests the “interplay of man and society, of biography and history, of self and world”<sup>159</sup> impacts on the social actor’s interpretive process.

*Motif of antiquity & modernity*

*Motif of the natural*

*Motif of the demonic / the devil*

***As soon as you [moderns] become natural, you become common. To you nature seems something hostile; you have made devils out of the smiling gods of Greece, and out of me a demon (Original emphasis).***

Venus herself indicates that it is the inability of the modern sensibility to properly address the Gods of antiquity. That the inappropriate view of ancient gods impacts in such a way that they become demonic, and it is the realm of the demonic that is the Shadow realm. So Venus informs Sacher-Masoch that it is

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<sup>159</sup> Mills, C. (1959). The sociological imagination. New York: Oxford University Press.

the perception of gods in modernity which induces the Shadow realm. While this present work does not emphasize the putting into historical context the original works of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch a consideration of Bakhtin's analysis of "the grotesque body" and "carnival" *Rabelais and His World* may be helpful, to a degree, in terms of addressing the works. Bakhtin regards the role of "folk humor" as strategic within the work of Rabelais. Bakhtin clarifies:

A boundless world of humorous forms and manifestations opposed the official and serious tone of medieval ecclesiastical and feudal culture. In spite of their variety....have one style in common: they belong to one culture of folk carnival humor....

1. *Ritual spectacles*: carnival pageants, comic shows of the marketplace.
2. *Comic verbal compositions*: parodies both oral and written, in Latin and in the vernacular.
3. *Various genres of billingsgate*: curses, oaths, popular blazons (p.5).

All these forms of protocol and ritual based on laughter and consecrated by tradition existed in all the countries of medieval Europe; they were sharply distinct from the serious official, ecclesiastical, feudal, and political cult forms and ceremonials. They offered a completely different, nonofficial, extraecclesiastical and extrapolitical aspect of the world and a second life outside officialdom (p. 6).

As opposed to the official feast....carnival celebrated temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchal rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions. Carnival was the true feast of time, the feast of becoming, change, and renewal

(p. 10, original emphasis).

both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch present inversions of the

normative worlds which they inhabited. Paradoxically, the inversions evidence underlying structures and assumptions about the social structures which are “inverted”; in a sense they are at once inverted, but also transparent, the structure is evidenced behind, through, the inversion. Inversion and hyperbole within the works critique, highlight, normative structure.

The Shadow realm is often associated with the devil, the keeper of the underworld, the rejected world. The underworld may be considered metaphorically that which is unconscious.

12

Venus continues:

*Motif of god*

*Motif of temperature  
(emotionally)*

**You do not require gods. We are chilled in your world.**

So it seems that the earthly realm chills the godly. The statement that gods are not required is ambiguous. It seems that Venus articulates the condition which has disconnected the moderns from the gods is the coldness, the lack of feeling, of modernity. Interestingly, it is exactly the coldness of which Venus speaks that charges Severin in the erotic realm.

Sacher-Masoch responds:

*Motif of emotional union*

*Motif of temporality*

*Motif of sensation*

*Motif of union / aloneness*

*Motif of subjugation*

**In love there is union into a single being for a short time only, capable of only one thought, one, sensation,**



**one will, in order to be then further disunited. And you know this better than I; whichever of the two fails to subjugate will soon feel the feet of the other on his neck -**

The motif of obedience is another of the overlapping motifs which may be found in both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch's work. While obedience is expected *by* the "friends" in de Sade's writing, it is Wanda von Dunajew who is, in fact, obedient, to Severin's wishes, even though Severin is the reverent. Interestingly, once Wanda internalizes the qualities of the relation which Severin cultivates, Severin loses interest in the relation. Lynn Chancer's work entitled *Sadomasochism in Everyday Life: The Dynamics of Power and Powerlessness*<sup>160</sup> takes up the notion that we, as social actors, depending upon the situation, can be, at one time, the commanding, or dominant element, and then at another time, the obeying or submissive element. Nietzsche also recognizes the incorporation of both elements as a possibility of existence: "...we are at the same time the commanding *and* the obeying parities..."<sup>161</sup> (p. 216).

The qualities of the relationship which Severin requires are contradictory and complex. He states that he is in love with Wanda, and Wanda is in love with Severin. But Severin wants to be Wanda's slave. He wishes subjugate himself *for* her, though she initially does not desire, or require this of him. Nevertheless,

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<sup>160</sup> Chancer, L. (1992). Sadomasochism in everyday life: The dynamics of power and powerlessness. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

<sup>161</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). Beyond good and evil. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). Basic writings of Nietzsche (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

Severin resolves to be placed in reduced circumstances vis-a-vis Wanda. In short, he needs her to be distant from him, though it is imperative that she be in relationship to him, to be emotionally aloof, and yet to be involved simultaneously. Severing needs Wanda to be involved, and uninvolved, at the same time. It is this aspect of his desire which is paradoxical and impossible. "[The] paradox of joy out of pain is perhaps one of the crucial enigmas of psychology..." <sup>162</sup> (p. 80). Contemporary psychology is focused on the alleviation of psychic suffering and as such, the *meaning of the desire to suffer* can only be viewed within the discipline of psychology, as perplexing. <sup>163</sup> When the view of suffering moves from alleviation to understanding, then the question of desire to suffer becomes, perhaps, more clear. Jungian analyst James Hollis argues that "...Jungian psychology, as well as much of the rich religious and mythological tradition from which it draws many of its insights, avers that it is the swamplands of the soul, the savannas of suffering, that provide the context for the stimulation and the attainment of meaning" <sup>164</sup> (p. 8).

An adversarial view of gender relations and struggle for dominance; the one who is more adept at subjugation always utilizes this ability at the expense of the sparing partner. Evidently it is natural to dominate that which can be dominated. The sexual union experienced by the heterosexual dyad unites only fleetingly, and this uniting is an anomaly of the usual

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<sup>162</sup> Menninger, K. (1966). Man against himself. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. (Original work published 1938)

<sup>163</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> Hollis, J. (1996). Swamplands of the soul: New life in dismal places. Toronto: Inner City.

relations of disunity and distance between the sexes. One is obliged to consider the homogenizing trends of the world through the expansion of a global economy. This homogenization process is encapsulated and represented by the one thought (corporal/bodily) and one sensation (psychic and intellectually) and one will (spirit).

Venus clearly and unmistakably outlines her relationship dynamic with Sacher-Masoch: he is

*Motif of slave*

**slave**

to her. He is slave as nature made women desirable to men (interestingly, attraction and desire is understood here as biological/natural rather than as socially constructed through the mind). And it is desire itself which makes vulnerable the one who desires, which strengthens the one desired. Therefore, to be desired is to be in a position of power by the very imbalance of desire itself. It is the distance, the wanting, of desire which holds relationship, rather than the giving way to it, which then, rather than allowing relation to flourish, begins to destroy it. Sacher-Masoch recognized the *power of desire as the state of desire*, of wanting, itself, rather than the process towards the satisfaction of it.

13

Further, Venus declares that the greater the sense of union between the sexes, the more likely the condition of indifference to the "Other". But antagonistic and imbalanced relations spurs

the desire on, the desire for union is best experienced as wanting, not as the actual condition itself. Not doing what one wants to do may be more intense, more erotic, more energized, than doing it.

14

The chapter closes with the acknowledgment from the author that the dialogue between Venus and the writer was

16

dream material. In this revelation, the reader is cued that unconscious elements are represented as personified through Venus and the relationship Sacher-Masoch has with her. The Jungian perspective on dreams, and the material which is made conscious through dreams, is that unconscious attitudes are made available to the dreamer *through* the interpretation of such symbols.

## CHAPTER II

Sacher-Masoch finds himself in the company of Severin von Kusiemski, a "peculiar" individual, male, who, contrary to general opinion of the surrounding neighbourhood community, is not, in the opinion of Sacher-Masoch, a

17

*Motif of danger*

*Motif of health & illness*

*Motif of sanity*

**dangerous madman.**

If the reader regards the relationship Sacher-Masoch has with Venus as an outer world enactment of an inner psychic

condition found within Sacher-Masoch, the reader may, too, view the relation Sacher-Masoch has with Severin as demonstrating the kind of inner relation Sacher-Masoch has with his own Shadow psychic component.

18

*Motif of science & the rational / empirical*

**He lived according to a minutely elaborated, quasi-philosophical, pseudo-practical system, like clock-work; not this alone, but also by the thermometer, barometer, aerometer, hydrometer....  
I let my eye glide over the curious apparatus, skeletons of animals, stuffed birds, globes, plaster-casts...a picture...**

The reader is cued that the room is filled with models, not the real and the living, but inanimate representations. The room is filled with measures of life, but themselves, lifeless.

Severin responds to Sacher-Masoch's recognition of the painting in Severin's study as the dream Venus by suggesting the image has a **counterpart**. This is a particularly interesting consideration in that the reader may regard, as with most symbolic analysis in dream work, the characters as representing elements of the writer's psychic totality. In this sense not only Severin (as Shadow personified) but also Venus (as Madonna/Goddess - an aspect of the anima or feminine psychic principle) and Wanda (as human/whore - aspect of the anima) may be understood and interpreted as representations of the psychic constellation of Sacher-Masoch at the time of writing the work.

The other portrait is too, lifeless, not "real", only "flattery".

Moving from image to event, Severin demonstrates his relations

to the opposite sex. He articulates:

**22**

*Motif of power*

*Motif of gender differences*

*Motif of self-understanding*

*Motif of choice*

*Motif of tyrant*

*Motif of slave*

**Women's power lies in man's passion, and she knows how to use it, if man doesn't understand himself. He has only one choice: to be the *tyrant* over or the *slave* of woman.**

Certainly this kind of dichotomous thinking shapes choice to either/or considerations. It is as though Sacher-Masoch deliberately constructs a situation wherein the extremes are unable to meet, the middle ground is denied.

### CHAPTER III

**25**

Severin offers Sacher-Masoch a manuscript entitled "Confessions of a Supersensual Man". The oeuvre begins with

*Motif of the demonic*

**a variation of the well known lines from Faust:  
"Though supersensual sensual wooer  
A woman leads you by the nose."**

This quotation is attributed to the character Mephistopheles. In other words, the quote comes from the individual to whom Faust sells his soul. Hence, the work opens with words from the one who makes others soulless. The fear of possession, or the loss of soul is a motif common among preliterate tribes, and is

also found not infrequently in myth and fairy tales.

The oeuvre is a compilation of diary entries. This is significant in that it is a recording of life events, it represents a process of relationship and or behaviour, and it implies a kind of personal frankness, a candidness which is characteristic of the intimacy with which one addresses themselves in diary form.

The work accounts a period of the writer's life which is described as

25

**crucial and abominable.**

25/26

*Motif of truth*

*Motif of history / memory / representation*

*Motif of emotion*

*Motif of opposites united*

**In very truth it is impossible ever frankly to write of one's past, but in this way events at least retain the fresh color of the present...the real comic muse is the one under whose laughing mask tears roll down.**

Here Sacher-Masoch addresses difficulty in communication. That the past is preserved in writing in such a way that it brings us to the present of the past. So too he touches upon issues of authenticity, mask, persona, and the internal struggle to present, or not present, to hide. The crucial notion of masking feelings is one of the most deleterious and pervasive riddles of contemporary Western culture. Nietzsche questions the very

desire to truth over untruth and uncertainty <sup>165</sup> (p. 199). Further, argues Nietzsche, to accept untruth would transcend the constructions of both good and evil. <sup>166</sup> (p. 202). Interestingly, the title of the oeuvre contains the word "confessions", which too is related to the notion of revealing that which has hither-to remained, by choice or accident, intentionally or unintentionally, hidden.

Bakhtin suggest that there is a "positive regenerating power of laughter" <sup>167</sup> (p. 45). Interestingly, the social actors within both the work of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch are allowed to, encouraged through the actions, events, of the fictional works, be emotional. While de Sade appears to grasp the transformational regenerative elements of laughter within the "grotesque" setting he develops, Sacher-Masoch's work evidences a "suffering" descent of the Shadow emotions of anguish and torment, abominable.

27/28

Severin, in his work, self-identifies as a **dilettante** not only to the arts, but in life as well. He identifies that he lives in a house, which is divided into separate quarters, with he on the ground floor, and a beautiful young widow on the first floor, the old woman who runs the house grows older and smaller daily. Also an old lame dog and a young cat reside in the house, which

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<sup>165</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). *Beyond good and evil*. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). Basic writings of Nietzsche (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

<sup>166</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>167</sup> Bakhtin, M. (1984). Rabelais and his world (H. Iswolsky Trans.). Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press. (Original work published 1965)



is located in the wilderness. He mentions a meadow in the garden close to the house in which a statue of Venus, most beautiful, is carved in stone. As with the arts and life, he identifies his dilettantesque attitude toward love. The narrator of this story indicates that his relationship with the feminine principle is cut off, that she is close, but living upstairs (which one may regard as being a symbol for being entirely in the head, or unconscious) with the green blinds (the color of rejuvenation and life) drawn (so that she is not visible). So too, by the identification with a dilettante attitudes towards "love", the narrator suggests that his relationship with the feminine in the outer world is also unsatisfactory and distant, undeveloped. The descriptive continues with the admission that he loves this Venus

29

*Motif of death*

**with a morbid intensity.**

The cut off quality of his relation with the feminine is as though the feminine is technically dead, though in fact, dormant would be a more accurate term, since psychic elements are not, as such, living or dead. The morbid intensity indicates that the relationship with the feminine principle is shifting, interest is there, but the feminine is stone, unavailable, dead. He confesses that he goes to visit the statue at night, night as the realm of the feminine, and prays to her. The psyche is not commanded, but rather honoured, in the way that Severin *honours Venus*.

Freud's death drive, Thanatos, is foreshadowed by  
Nietzsche:

Physiologists should think before putting down the instinct of self-preservation as the cardinal instinct of an organic being. A living seeks above all to *discharge* its strength - life itself is *will to power*; self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent *results*. <sup>168</sup> (p. 211).

#### CHAPTER IV

31

It is during chapter four that the motif of relation, desire for connectedness, fascination with Venus the goddess, and the personification, becomes clearly demonstrated and articulated within the work. Repeatedly throughout the chapter, images of beauty, beauty juxtaposed with harshness, coldness, cruelty are presented.

It is a photograph, an image of time arrested, a documentation of a particular moment or condition, which spurs Venus, the statue, to become animated and present herself to Severin. Further, it is a photograph of Venus herself. And significantly, the composition of the photograph is that Venus is looking into a mirror, at her own reflection. So to recapitulate, the ability to see the goddess reflecting back to herself, a kind of reflexivity of the goddess, gives to Severin, the opportunity to engage with the goddess as animated, "living" goddess. The reader may regard a photograph (a movie, television picture, theatrical performance) as a kind of projection, an image which is

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<sup>168</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). *Beyond good and evil*. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). *Basic writings of Nietzsche* (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

known because it is not personal, but *projected* outwards for viewing. Severin can see the reflexivity of the goddess through the ability to view the projection. And it is the projection, and Severin's acquisition of the projection as object (self distance) which allows the animation of the feminine goddess, which had hither-to been arrested, inanimate, stone. Yet the motif suggests more.

33

Severin mistakenly gives up the goddess image to the housekeeper, having loaned the housekeeper a book in which the photograph was kept. This suggests a further connection with the feminine principle, as represented not by the goddess, but by the housekeeper, the domestic, the woman of the home. This concrete homeliness contrasts with the spirit, the ephemerality, of the goddess. Descriptives such as:

31

*Motif of despot / tyrant*

*Motif of fur*

*Motif of cruelty -love -beauty*

**...you wrap yourself in *despotic* furs...**

**...cruel goddess of love and beauty...**

32

*Motif of rapture*

*Motif of happiness*

*Motif of torment*

*Motif of the erotic*

*Motif of worship*

*Motif of slave*

*Motif of pity*

**...I was enraptured...**

**To love, to be loved, what happiness! And yet how the glamour of this pales by comparison with the tormenting bliss of worshipping a woman who makes a plaything out of us, of being the slave of a beautiful tyrant who treads us pitilessly underfoot.**

Rosemary Gordon, Jungian analyst and author of the article entitled *Masochism: The Shadow Side of the Archetypal Need to Venerate and Worship* puts forward some interesting, insightful, and unusual perspectives to the understanding of masochism.

Gordon outlines Freud's model of masochism. Freud suggested not only the psychic libidinal drives associated with the energetic qualities of life, but also the death drive, Thanatos. He postulated two types of masochism, primary and secondary. "Primary masochism is the direct expression of Thanatos, the death drive, when the object is still one's own self...secondary masochism [is regarded as a] reversal, a turning upon oneself....the sadistic impulses and feelings experienced towards another" <sup>169</sup> (p. 241). But Gordon critiques the Freudian perspective:

but Freud and Klein do not, or so it seems, accept, or at least they pay no attention to, concepts such as 'the transformation of impulses' or to the theme of 'death and rebirth' or to the 'symbolic meaning of death', or to man's possible basic need to search for something or somebody that transcends his personal being. And yet, in order to understand the masochistic impulse and the masochistic experience, we must consider and explore further these ideas. For masochism is, after all, evinced not only in the pursuit of physical pain, but also in such psychological states as longing for

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<sup>169</sup> Gordon, R. (1987). Masochism: The shadow side of the archetypal need to venerate and worship. In A. Samuels (Ed.), Psychopathology: Contemporary Jungian perspectives (pp.237-254). London: Karnac.

surrender, for dependence on others, for helplessness, for self-abnegation or for immersion and unity in and with an "other". It is also interesting that while some regard masochism as a means of symbolic self-annihilation, others understand it as a way of resisting the experience of the annihilation of self. Instead, pain is used as proof that there is some sort of identity....as a sort of pinching oneself to know one is awake... 170

Freud's model of libido and thanatos drives may be viewed as directions on a continuum of behaviour, the libidinal moving toward the positive or life end of the continuum, and thanatos toward the negative or death end of the continuum. Freud was a pioneer, and as with all pioneers, they paved the way for those behind them. But much of the work of the pioneer needs to be revised. The pioneer points the direction, and it is for the new settlers to hone and refine. Gordon takes up the consideration that the negative might not be entirely bad; it might even be necessary to the psyche. The notion that relations based not on egalitarianism, a fashionable notion so perniciously ubiquitous in our contemporary culture, could be vital to the wellbeing, completeness, of the individual psyche is so antithetical to contemporary understandings and expectations within relations that it seems unfathomable initially. But the psyche is more than just the reservoir of the personal unconscious. It includes the collective unconscious as well, and as such, proves to be a more stable and enduring, historical, element. Contemporary society may change rapidly, but the psyche is rooted in slow evolving historical development.

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<sup>170</sup> *ibid.*

Gordon insightfully notes that masochism is more than the enjoyment of pain, either psychic or physical. It is more than just self-annihilation. Most importantly, Gordon regards masochism as a vehicle which allows the relation to "The Other" to emerge.

Nietzsche discusses the notion of worship (veneration) in terms of the powerful worshipping the saint. Insightfully, Nietzsche recognizes the concept of the Shadow in that he posits that the powerful worship the saint because in the saint

they sensed the superior force that sought to test itself in such a conquest, the strength of the will in which they recognized and honored their own strength and delight in dominion: they honored something in themselves when they honored the saint <sup>171</sup> (p. 255).

So, in this sense, it is self-recognition which ultimately allows an individual to worship, to venerate. Nietzsche correctly realizes the recognition of self in "Other", of understanding self through the projection of self qualities on the "Other". Shadow is evidenced by Nietzsche's insight in that the unconscious element is recognized in "The Other".

While pain may be a strategic part of masochism, it is the witnessing of the pain which is paramount, and the witness must be in relationship to the victim. It is clear from Sacher-Masoch's work that the event wherein "the lion", Wanda's newly found lover, whips Severin, is unappealing to Severin because the event occurs outside relationship. By relationship, this author refers to

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<sup>171</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). *Beyond good and evil*. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). Basic writings of Nietzsche (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

relation, to be related, to be engaged with "The Other". While Severin and "the lion" have some kind of relationship due to their close proximity, they are not *in relation to each other*.

34

*Motif of restraint / self-control*

**I cannot resist. I feel a strange urge, and call within me.**

Severin, bathed in light of the full moon, visits the meadow statue of Venus, realizes that the statue is cloaked in furs. He escapes in fear, retreats, and in so doing, comes face to face with

35

*Motif of the goddess*

*Motif of beauty*

*Motif of the feminine*

*Motif of temperature*

**Venus sitting...on a stone bench, not the beautiful woman of marble, but the goddess of love herself with warm blood and throbbing pulses.**

Severin retreats from the goddess. Befuddled, he says to himself the word

36

*Motif of self-understanding*

*Motif of self-identity*

*Motif of human / animal division*

**"Donkey!"**

which somehow clarifies his position. The image of the animal of burden is an appropriate one in light of Severin's desire to undertake all of the hardships in his romantic relations. The image is particularly striking in light of the proximity to the

goddess; note the hierarchical positions of goddess (elevated) and donkey (lower). However, he asks a significant question of himself:

37

*Motif of authenticity*

*Motif of admission*

**What am I really, a little dilettante, or a great big donkey?**

Encapsulated here is the great question "What am I?" and the related sociological question "What is human and what is not?" Which behaviours are human, which are not? Is love an experience which transcends human social conditioning, and transforms the human into the non-human, hence animal? Perhaps the popularity of love in contemporary culture in the West relates to the individual who finds himself in love and is allowed to step out of rigid normative expectations as a result. Perhaps the very attraction of "being in love" is the relaxing of the social, the human, expectations.

Again, Severin comes into contact with the animated Venus, but Severin notes that it is

**-the widow, and yet-Venus-oh, what a woman!**

This is particularly significant in that it indicates a synthesizing, an integrative event. Two distinct aspects of the feminine principle as yet presented, the widow, and the goddess, become one, amalgamated. Sacher-Masoch melds female characters within the work with Venus the goddess, "Venus in Furs". The character Wanda von Dunajew is introduced on page 38 as a distinct character, seems to be merged with the goddess Venus,



and the distinction between Wanda and the goddess minimal and unclear:

38

**Her name is Wanda von Dunajew. And she admits, with a thrilling little laugh, that it was she who played Venus to me last night.**

40

Wanda presents herself to Severin, and enjoys his discomfort and fear, fear of the goddess herself. Importantly, during their conversation, Wanda indicates that Severin's interest in his masochistic enjoyment of women's sexual power over him is a distinctly

*Motif of antiquity / modernity*

**modern point of view.**

The modern point of view supports Bakhtin's observations of the shifts in approach to the negative through laughter.

Significantly, Wanda does not share his sensibility regarding love, and articulates her position:

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of pain*

**pleasure without pain.**

41

*Motif of battle / war*

*Motif of the spirit*

*Motif of the senses*

*Motif of mind/body dualism*

**The battle of the spirit with the senses is the gospel of modern man I do not care to participate in it.**

The battle of the spirit with the senses is an interesting

consideration. Severin does not clarify exactly what this means. It seems to gesture to the notion that there is a tension between the mind and the body, the psyche and soma.

41

Again Severin makes reference to the differences between the moderns and the ancients, in this example, he notes that the moderns are not supportive of the antique serenity.

42

*Motif of inflation*

*Motif of the impossibility of permanence of love*

*Motif of changeability*

**It is only man's egoism which wants to keep women hidden away like some buried treasure. Its futility is proven by the fact that all endeavours to introduce permanence into love, the most changeable thing in this changeable human existence...**

Wanda here identifies the subordinate stance which women are allocated culturally *by* men. The weight of this statement is not diminished by the brevity of the delivery. This is a position which, certainly at the time of writing and original publication, as well as now within contemporary Western culture, is denied within the dominant hegemonic construction. Further, women as the primary proponents of sexual restriction through the vows of marriage, domestic attachment and expectation of longitudinal relations through marriage vows, is challenged by Wanda, and instead, Wanda suggests that **love is changeable.**

The Jungian notion of the archetypal feminine principle known as the anima is complimentary to Wanda's position of changeable love. What changeable love means is that the actors within the love dyad *live*. The relation which Wanda views as the relation of love is alive, changeable, in vitro, in flux from the aliveness of the relationship. As such, the duration of the relationship corresponds to the relatedness of the actors, and is not defined through convention such as vows of marriage.

#### **42/43**

*Motif of rebellion against normative social structure*

*Motif of risk*

*Motif of individualism*

*Motif of hypocrisy*

*Motif of respect*

*Motif of authenticity*

**But you are about to say...that the individual who rebels against the arrangements of society ostracized, branded, stoned. So be it [sic] I am willing to take the risk....I am so anxious to live my own live as it pleases me, that I am prepared to do without your hypocritical respect.**

Recognizing the possibility of formal and informal negative sanctions against the individual that goes against the grain of society, Wanda continues to live in ways which are consistent with her own personal value system. Contemporary authors such as Lasch have been outspoken in critiquing contemporary culture as individualistic and consequently, highly narcissistic.<sup>172</sup> She suggests that the respect shown to women within the existing

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<sup>172</sup> Lasch, C. (1991). The culture of narcissism: American life in an age of diminishing expectations. New York: W.W. Norton.  
(Original work published 1979)

sexual dyadic structure sanctioned by culture is only hypocritical.

Wanda clarifies the term

**serenely**

which she uses earlier in the text:

**43**

*Motif of youth*

*Motif of wealth*

*Motif of beauty*

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of enjoyment*

**I am young, rich, and beautiful, and shall continue to live serenely for the sake of pleasure and enjoyment.**

Young, rich, and beautiful are three of the primary motivating factors which propel and sustain contemporary capitalism production through the pairing of such attributes with product creating commodity fetishism. Wanda then

**46**

comes to her vision of the Other:

*Motif of beauty*

*Motif of freedom*

*Motif of happiness*

*Motif of slave*

*Motif of volition (choice)*

*Motif of desire*

*Motif of equality*

*Motif of love (emotion)*

**Beautiful, free, serene, and happy human beings, such as the Greeks were, are only possible when it is permitted to have *slaves* to perform the prosaic tasks of everyday for them and above all else labor for them. Of course, she replied playfully, an Olympian divinity,**

**such as I am, requires a whole army of slaves. Beware of me!**

**Why?...**

**Do you want to be my slave?**

**There is no equity in love...When ever it is a matter of choice for me of ruling or being ruled, it seems much**

Stekel's observation that disgust "is the dread of contact, desire the wish for it" <sup>173</sup> (p. 23) applied to Severin's wish for distant closeness with Wanda seems to display the emotional ambivalence which he experiences.

The impossibility of equity in love (or perhaps in any relationship) seems antithetical to contemporary notions of equity. Authors like William Henry III suggest that notions of equity are erroneous and deleterious:

We have foolishly embraced the unexamined notions that everyone is pretty much alike (and, worse, should be), that self-fulfilment is more important than objective achievement, that the common man is always right...that a good and just society should be far more concerned with succouring its losers....<sup>174</sup>

(p. 13).

The reader may then regard Severin as displaying a condition of "reality" as observed by Henry, which is nonegalitarian, yet displays the actual conditions of relations.

**ILLUSTRATION: "...HARNESSED ME TO THE PLOUGH."**

**47**

**more satisfactory to me to be the slave of a beautiful woman.**

This dialogue appears straightforward - the positioning and

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<sup>173</sup> Stekel, W. (1953). Sadism and masochism: The psychology of hatred and cruelty (L. Brink, Trans.). New York: Liveright. (Original work published 1929).

<sup>174</sup> Henry III, W. (1994). In defense of elitism. New York: Anchor.

allocation of roles related to gender. Of interest is the closing section of the chapter. Severin indicates that it is through the service he offers to Wanda that his talents are utilized. Further, he suggests that he would like to paint her portrait. He, in essence, desires a replication of her image, a documentation of Venus herself.

## CHAPTER V

49

This chapter begins with a declarative by Severin:

*Motif of gift*

*Motif of fur*

**I shall make her a present of furs.**

One is reminded of the power of gifts, the imbalancing structure of gifts and gift-giving.<sup>175</sup>

Severin states that he does not believe that he is in love with Wanda, nor is he engaged in a spiritual union with her; instead, he is

50

experiencing a  
**physical subjection.**

Yet, not much later in the chapter Severin declares, after having asked Wanda if she could love him, that he wishes to marry Wanda. She indicates that she does not think that she could love a man for more than a month, Severin, perhaps two months, but she suggests that she will allow Severin

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<sup>175</sup> See Miller, W. (1993). Humiliation: And other essays on honour, social discomfort, and violence. Ithaca: Cornell. for considerations of imbalance through gifts.

## 56

*Motif of agreement*

*Motif of marriage*

*Motif of complementarity*

*Motif of satisfaction*

**...a year's time to win me, to convince me that we are suited to each other, that we might live together. If you succeed, I will become your wife, and a wife, Severin, who will conscientiously and strictly perform all her duties. During this year we will live as though we were married --...We will live together,...share our daily life, so that we may find out whether we are really fitted for each other. I grant you the rights of a husband, of a lover, of a friend. Are you satisfied?**

While de Sade's work devalued the institution of marriage, here Sacher-Masoch positions the marriage motif as a central goal of relation. In this sense his work is traditional. Note the "rights" of a husband and the continual references to normative heterosexual dyadic structure.

However, the preceding page offers some remarkable insight from Wanda regarding the power of lasting intimate relations:

## 55

*Motif of imagination*

*Motif of monogamy*

*Motif of subjugation*

*Motif of dominance & submission*

*Motif of gender relations*

**I can easily imagine belonging to one man for my entire life, but he would have to be a whole man, a man who would subjugate me by his innate strength, do you understand? And every man - I know this very well - as soon as he falls in love becomes weak, pliable, ridiculous. He puts himself into the woman's hands, kneels down before her. The only man whom I**

**could love permanently would be he before whom I should have to kneel. I've gotten to like you so much, however, that I'll try it with you.**

This section of the work has powerful connotations sociologically: Wanda articulates the temporary quality of significant relationship. Surely this undermines the institution of marriage, of courtship and intimate relations, all relations in fact. Recognizing the transitory nature of relation undermines the hegemonic construction of order through predictable social relations, for example, marriage. (read predictable - and it is no surprise that science is vitally concerned with *predictability* -read order)

Further, Wanda strangely contradicts herself, as does Severin. Severin indicates that he is not in love with Wanda, but then quickly following this admission, declares his love for her; Wanda indicates that she could not love a man for longer than two months, more likely one month, but then admits that she can conceive of having an extended relation with a man, providing that he subjugate her (in a similar fashion to that desired by Severin). Ironically, the two individuals - Wanda and Severin - both wish to be subjugated by their significant other.

In several pages of the text, Sacher-Masoch has dismissed the notion of extended relations, and in general marriage, advocates premarital co-habitation, and endorses the notion of negation, (read subjugation) as the salient quality crucial to satisfactory extended sexual relation.

The inversions evidenced within Sacher-Masoch's work



point to the Shadow realm of normative relations.

## CHAPTER VI

57

*Motif of emotion (love)  
and the experience of emotion*

*Motif of inevitability*

**My love seems to me like a deep, bottomless abyss,  
into which I subside deeper and deeper. There is  
nothing now which can save me from it.**

Severin indicates that love is a situation which displaces the individual from everything else, in that it places the one in love into an abyss, a void, a non-existence, the realm of the negation, the absent. And importantly, there is no thing which can rescue the one placed in the abysmal helplessness of love, of intimate feeling connection to the "Other".

58

*Motif of suffering*

*Motif of sanity / insanity*

*Motif of loss & possession*

*Motif of torment*

**Oh, I am suffering frightfully....and yet my love for  
you has become a sort of madness. The thought that I  
might loose you, perhaps actually lose you, torments  
me day and night.**

This admission on the part of Severin indicates that there is a kind of attitude which is associated with love which, even though it catapults one into a situation of aloneness, make the individual afraid to shift this attitude. It becomes "normal" feeling.

In his work published in 1938 Karl Menninger's *Man*

*Against Himself* attempts to argue that self-destructive impulses are based upon the struggle between libidinal impulses of eros and thanatos. These Freudian terms represent polarities on a continuum of behaviours. Thanatos, the death instinct, or drive, battles against eros, the drive toward life. "Hate and love are the emotional representatives of the destructive [thanatos] and constructive [eros] tendencies" <sup>176</sup> (p. 6).

*Motif of persons as possession/property*

**But you don't possess me.**

This is Wanda's reply. Ironically, it clearly indicates that the *illusion* of involvement during the experience of love, is no different than the condition of individuality.

59

*Motif of conditionality*

*Motif of knowing "The Other"*

*Motif of good & bad*

*Motif of abandon*

*Motif of arrogance*

*Motif of person as property*

*Motif of suffering*

**You will be mine only under conditions, while I belong to you unconditionally -**

**That isn't wise, Severin[.] Don't you know me yet, do you absolutely refuse to know me? I am good when I am treated seriously and reasonably, but when you abandon yourself too absolutely to me, I grow arrogant--**

**So be it, be arrogant, be despotic....only be mine, mine forever....If you cannot be mine, all mine for always, the *I want to be your slave, serve you, suffer***

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<sup>176</sup> Menninger, K. (1966). Man against himself. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. (Original work published 1938)

**everything.**

Taylor suggests that suffering may be resultant from the inability to “the demand to incorporate the good in my life” and that the inability to do so “leads to an overwhelming depreciation of myself” <sup>177</sup> (p. 81). Perhaps the desire to be slave then rests in a gesture to acquiesce, to give up being good before the failure to do so becomes actual. Szasz disagrees: “...pain and suffering indicate....that we are trying to be good....The whole concept of masochism....deals with this aspect of pain” <sup>178</sup> (p. 249).

**61**

*Motif of enjoyment*

*Motif of happiness*

*Motif of emotion*

*Motif of pain*

*Motif of betrayal*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of luxury*

**If I am not permitted to enjoy the happiness of love, fully and wholly, I want to taste its pains and torments to the very dregs; I want to be maltreated and betrayed by the woman I love, and the more cruelly the better. This too is a luxury.**

Severin indicates that relationship with the loved one is unconditional. The response of the loved one along a continuum of behaviour is more important than the quality of response from the loved one. But later in the work Severin does indeed become conditional and so the desired relation arrests.

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<sup>177</sup> Taylor, C. (1994). Source of the self: The making of the modern identity. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. (Original work published 1989)

<sup>178</sup> Szasz, T. (1975). Pain and pleasure: A study of bodily feelings. New York: Basic.

*Motif of marriage*

*Motif of slave*

*Motif of entertainment*

*Motif of power*

*Motif of imprudence*

*Motif of choice*

**Do with me what you will, make of me your husband or your slave.**

**Very well,...it seems to be it would be rather entertaining to have a man, who interests me and loves me, completely in my power; at least I shall not lack pastime. You were imprudent enough to leave the choice to me, Therefore I choose; I want you to be my slave....**

The relationship between Severin and Wanda has been clearly articulated and the parameters declared.<sup>179</sup> The relationship which Wanda had been forging, against Severin's desires, has given way to the inegalitarian one Severin favours. Severin continues:

**62**

*Motif of opposites*

*Motif of enemies*

*Motif of extreme*

*Motif of hate*

*Motif if fear*

*Motif of happiness*

*Motif of emotion (love)*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of hierarchy*

*Motif of attraction*

*Motif of reason*

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<sup>179</sup> Nietzsche discusses "master morality and slave morality" (p. 394) in Nietzsche, F. (1968). *Beyond good and evil*. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). *Basic writings of Nietzsche* (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

*Motif of enjoyment*

*Motif of suffering*

**We are such opposites, almost enemies. That is why my love is part hate, part fear....I cannot be happy when I look down upon that woman I love. I want to adore a woman, and this I can only do when she is cruel towards me.**

***...It is possible to love really only that which stands above us... (Original emphasis).***

Severin indicates that love is only possible in inegalitarian situations. Equality (apparently) does not foster love.

The motif of hierarchy is a core concept within the work of both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. In fact, the motif of hierarchy is one of the motifs clearly evidenced in both works.

Both works address power imbalance through hierarchy. de Sade's work takes the perspective of the elevated status within the hierarchical system, though "The Other" within the work is superfluous in terms of entity, and is only strategic in terms of satisfaction. "The Other" in de Sade's work is unimportant with the exception of assistance in the sexuality of the individuals who are of elevated status on the hierarchical ladder.

The work of Sacher-Masoch is replete with motifs but, as with de Sade, the variations of motif are narrow, overlap, and are frequently repetitive.

Wanda clarifies Severin's position:

**62 / 63**

*Motif of reason*

**Then that which repels others, attracts you....In other words, reason has little power over you...**

The appellation of being unreasonable is extreme. But it is qualified with the appellation supersensual. Indicated here, the martyrs found **enjoyment in suffering.**

## CHAPTER VII

65

Severin is in conversation with Wanda. He indicates that the supersensualist qualities which he demonstrates now were intact during his childhood. However, quickly following the notion of "natural" development, Severin suggests that he

*Motif of human / animal division*

*Motif of victim*

*Motif of development*

**scorned the healthy breast of my nurse, and had to be brought up on goat's milk.**

The human/animal division is continually questioned and indicated as infirm in Severin's case. (Donkey)

Severin also indicates that he, intuitively, was repelled by the church as a child. Severin also admits that he worshipped the Venus statue in his father's study, rather than venerating through the socially acceptable channels of the church. Most interestingly, Severin admits to avoidance of the base, coarse, and obscene, during his formative years. As he associated

*Motif of love as base*

**love for women [as] something especially base and unbeautiful and consequently**

*Motif of abstinence*

**avoided all contact with the fair sex.**

Severin admits to repression of the Shadow elements during his childhood. A conscious repression, he avoided contact with women. As already indicated within this present work, the Shadow cannot be indefinitely repressed, but only be made unconscious, unaware to consciousness.

**68**

*Motif of bondage*

*Motif of punishment*

*Motif of spirit*

*Motif of emotion*

*Motif of mercy*

**One day my parents drove to the capital of the district. My aunt determined to take advantage of their absence, and to exercise judgment over me. She entered unexpectedly in the fur-lined *kazabaika* (women's jacket), followed by the cook, kitchen maid, and the cat of a chamber-maid whom I had scorned. Without asking any questions. They seized me and bound me hand and foot, in spite of my violent resistance. Then my aunt, with an evil smile, rolled up her sleeve and began to whip me with a stout switch. She whipped me so hard that the blood flowed, and that, at last, notwithstanding my heroic spirit, I cried and wept and begged for mercy. She then had me untied, but I had to get down on my knees and thank her for the punishment and kiss her hand.**

This passage demonstrates that early childhood experience has marred his development and through association, he now finds this kind of relationship highly satisfactory. the notion of developmental influence is a cornerstone ideology of

contemporary understanding of personality development. The qualities and events described in the previous passage are key behaviours and attitudes to his present relationship style.

Severin continues:

**69**

*Motif of imagination*

*Motif of perfection*

*Motif of the goddess*

**In my imagination sensuality become a sort of cult. I took an oath to myself that I would not squander its holy wealth upon any ordinary person, but I would reserve it for an ideal woman, if possible for the goddess of love herself.**

Severin declares that he realizes that his position towards women became distinctly unusual (a cult) and that he would dispense with relationship until he could attain an (unattainable) ideal, the **goddess of love herself.**

**71**

Severin refers to a betrayal he experience as a younger man, by an older woman. He suggests that this was a pivotal experience regarding his rejection of

*Motif of virtue*

**poetical, sentimental virtue.**

Aldo Carotenuto, Italian Jungian analyst suggests that “the ways of the betrayer and betrayed turn out always to be the same, as though they were interchangeable. The betrayed deserves to be



betrayed and the betrayer cannot avoid betraying”<sup>180</sup> (p. 10).

Carotenuto clarifies:

The potentially jealous individual falls in love with someone irrepressively driven to put him to the test, just as the betrayer needs a jealous person to control and contain his tendency to betray. This is one example of neurotic collusion, an attraction based on a pathological interplay which is binding to the extent that it is experienced unconsciously. The desire to betray conceals an insatiable thirst for confirmation; self-esteem has never been consolidated, and consequently the need for daily affective and erotic reassurance is created. (p. 96).

Related to the notion of betrayal is the notion of suspicion. Suspicion begins with intuition. Inquiry reveals evidence, or unearths more questions. But suspicion often precedes the discovery of betrayal, though not always, and the betrayed may find himself in an *unexpectedly* surprisingly compromised situation.

Upon discovery of being betrayed, one finds oneself in a situation which may suggest pollution. The insincere overture, engagement, impacts upon the betrayed with the experience of having been polluted by the contact with the insincere. It is as though something has been stolen from one's identity<sup>181</sup> (p. 16) or that association with that which betrays pollutes<sup>182</sup> (p. 132). In fact, Miller argues that disgust has a connection with purity, further it “defends against the impure and it punishes for our

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<sup>180</sup> Carotenuto, A. (1996). *To love to betray: Life as betrayal* (J. Tambureno, Trans.). Wilmet, Illinois: Chiron. (Original work published 1991)

<sup>181</sup> Carotenuto, A. (1996). *To love to betray: Life as betrayal* (J. Tambureno, Trans.). Wilmet, Illinois: Chiron. (Original work published 1991)

<sup>182</sup> *ibid.*

failures to be pure”<sup>183</sup> (p. 106). Miller continues:

Disgust has other powerful communalizing capacities and is especially useful and necessary as a builder of moral and social community. It performs this function obviously by helping define and locate the boundary separating our group from their group, purity from pollution, the violable from the inviolable. It does so also as a consequence of its capacity for being readily experienced vicariously. Disgust, like indignation, is something we experience as much upon hearing and seeing offences done to another as those done to ourselves. Both emotions seem to compel us to what is often styled as the victim’s position (p. 195).

Severin reaccounts his earlier years during this chapter, and Wanda is almost silent throughout. Her verbiage at the close of the chapter is significant:

72

*Motif of corruption*

**You have a curious way of arousing one’s imagination....Oh, you are the kind of man who will corrupt a woman to her very last fiber.**

Wanda is aware of the reciprocal nature of relations. Both Wanda and Severin are related to the other, but it is within the relationship that the relationship, together, exists. Neither seems to display autonomy independently of the other. Wanda indicates her awareness of the impact of Severin’s position. She indicates that he is influential regardless of her intention and desires. In a sense, Wanda is suggesting that her social self is in peril through Severin’s ability to transcend normative social framework

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<sup>183</sup> Miller, W. I. (1997). *The anatomy of disgust*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard.

## CHAPTER VIII

Chapter eight begins with a motif demonstrated in chapter one: the appearance of "Venus in Furs". Immediately after this passage, Wanda von Dunajew appears. A kind of universality of women, the goddess as represented uniquely, and through women seems to be Sacher-Masoch's intention.

74

Severin and Wanda discuss cats and fur. He indicates the charged nature of women donning furs:

*Motif of symbolism*

*Motif of fur*

*Motif of power*

*Motif of beauty*

**the symbolic meaning which furs have acquired [are] the attribute[s] of power and beauty.**

Severin associates Wanda von Dunajew, his living "Venus" with furs. As Barthes observes above, furs in this capacity adorn the human as object. As with the general paradoxical structure of the relation between Wanda and Severin, the furs, the prop of the unveiled body, serve to make it more "remote", a quality which characterizes the style of relation between Severin and Wanda.

75

*Motif of understanding*

*Motif of dominance*

*Motif of minding as elementary*

**I understand, Wanda interrupted. It gives a dominant and imposing quality to a woman. Not only that, I continued. You know I am *supersensual*. With me everything has its roots in the**

**imagination, and thence it receives its nourishment.**

Severin realizes that the nature of sexuality begins in the mind and trickles down into the body.

76

*Motif of the sacred*

*Motif of sex*

*Motif of beauty & the divine*

*Motif of nature*

**I felt there was something sacred in sex; in fact it was the only sacred thing. In woman and her beauty I saw something divine, because the most important function of existence - the continuation of the species - is her vocation. To me woman represented a personification of nature...**

Severin indicates that the realm previously allocated to that which is sacred, religion, is now replaced with sex. Contemporary authors like Herbert Marcuse have argued that everything in contemporary society is eroticized.<sup>184</sup> The Darwinian notion of evolution and species selection is evidenced through the value of women as procreators. Interestingly, the dual responsibility of procreation is not acknowledged here. Gender divisions of reproduction are rigidly upheld.

Interestingly Sacher-Masoch suggests that it is women who are associated with nature. In de Sade's work emphasis with the body, the natural body, "food, drink, defecation, and sexual life"<sup>185</sup> (p.18) is here in Sacher-Masoch's work absent, and nature is linked

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<sup>184</sup> Marcuse, H. (1991). One dimensional man. Boston: Beacon Press.  
(Original work published 1964)

<sup>185</sup> Bakhtin, M. (1984). Rabelais and his world (H. Iswolsky Trans.).  
Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.  
(Original work published 1965)

with the divine, the non-human; nature is in a sense inverted to the realm of the divine. The “grotesque realism” of the body is absent here and replaced with an idealism and an emphasis on perfection. Marion Woodman suggests that women may be regarded as Shadow in the contemporary Western patriarchal social structure.<sup>186</sup>

78

Severin recapitulates his desire for maltreatment from his lover. Severin identified the concept of unrequited love as the ultimate erotic motif for Severin

80

Wanda admits that she is becoming

*Motif of corruption*

**corrupted**

by the things of which Severin speaks. However, Wanda is still reluctant to engage in the kind of abusive relationship Severin requests. Just as de Sade teaches the reader, and the troupe within his remote setting through the storyteller’s stories, so too Severin is teaching Wanda, instructing, moulding, shaping relation. Wanda does indicate that she will try and oblige him:

*Motif of emotion (love)*

**...I will try, for you sake, for I love you Severin, as I have loved no other man.**

## CHAPTER IX

This is the pivotal chapter wherein Wanda succumbs to Severin’s request. Severin is engaged with Wanda in the post of

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<sup>186</sup> Formal interview with Marion Woodman (Toronto, June 21, 1997).

“slave”. Wanda is playing at the dominatrix position. Through coaxing, she becomes more and more dominant and cruel.

89

*Motif of enjoyment*

*Motif of the demonic*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of pain*

*Motif of punishment*

*Motif of begging*

*Motif of mercy*

*Motif of danger*

**I am beginning to enjoy it...but enough for today. I am beginning to feel a demonic curiosity to see how far your strength goes. I take a cruel joy in seeing you tremble and write beneath my whip, and in hearing your groans and wails; I want to go on whipping without pity until you beg for mercy, until you loose your senses. You have awakened dangerous elements in my being...**

Implicit is the notion that cruelty lies dormant with the character of the individual. The repressed Shadow qualities are becoming roused. Storr suggests that humans are the most cruel species on the planet.<sup>187</sup> Again, note that the actual qualities of the personal Shadow are not universal, rather, the model of Shadow is universal: undesired or negative elements are repressed to the unconscious realm but influence conscious interactions.

## CHAPTER X

Severin wakes to the knowledge that he has had the pleasure of Wanda's wrath but articulated at their next meeting Wanda indicates that she wants to

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<sup>187</sup> Storr, A. (1987). Human aggression. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin. (Original work published 1968)

92

*Motif of forgetting*

*Motif if the ugly*

*Motif of insanity*

*Motif of reasonableness*

*Motif of happiness*

*Motif of emotion (love)*

**...forget the ugly scene of yesterday....I have fulfilled your mad wish, now let us be reasonable and happy and love each other...**

Note the relationship between reason and happiness. It is as though Wanda regards happiness as available only through normative relations. Further, Severin's interests are framed as mad, insane. Behaviours which are antithetical to agreed-upon modes of behaviour within culture is frequently pathologized.

95

*Motif of strangeness*

*Motif of shifts from dyadic to triadic relations*

**It is strange how every relation in life assumes a different face as soon as a new person enters.**

Simmel's work on dyadic and triadic relations are easily related to the aforementioned quotation. He suggests that the dynamic shifts markedly with the inclusion of a third in the dyadic relation. <sup>188</sup>

Wanda's friend has come to visit, and changed the dynamic of the relation between Severin and Wanda.

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<sup>188</sup> See The isolated individual and the dyad and The triad In Simmel, G. (1964). The sociology of Georg Simmel. K. Wolff (Trans. & Ed.). New York: Free Press. (Original work published 1906)

*Motif of despising*

*Motif of hypocrisy*

*Motif of respect*

*Motif of virtue*

*Motif of pleasure*

**Perhaps she feels that I despise her....[b]ecause she is a hypocrite....I respect only a woman who is actually virtuous, or who openly lives for pleasure's sake.**

Stekel's *Sadism and Masochism: The Psychology of Hatred and Cruelty*<sup>189</sup> was written in 1929 and while this work displays serious limitations concerning the analysis of sadomasochism, it is, nevertheless, an interesting work in that it puts forward certain assumptions around relations which, in hind sight, become glaringly vulnerable.

The ability to speculate around the position of the "Other" relates to the Meadian concept of "taking the attitude of the other".

Hypocrisy begs questions of authenticity. It is related to "truth" but "truth" becomes fluid through the interpretive process. Storr suggests that cultural "moral hypocrisy leads in the end to compelling men to play a part and to want to feel themselves better than they really are"<sup>190</sup> (p. 7). Severin's behaviour, his deliberate devaluation of status can be read as a desire for truth, an avoidance of hypocrisy.

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<sup>189</sup> Stekel, W. (1953). Sadism and masochism: The psychology of hatred and cruelty (L. Brink, Trans.). New York: Liveright. (Original work published 1929).

<sup>190</sup> Storr, A. (1987). Human aggression. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin. (Original work published 1968)



Szasz's insight that humans seek "pleasure and tr[y] to avoid pain" and that contemporary psychology "has taken the conception of *pleasure* as something self-evident and has used its desirability, and man's search for it, as one of its scientific axioms" <sup>191</sup> (p. 185, original emphasis).

Wanda replies:

*Motif of the character qualities of the feminine*

*Motif of internal conflict*

*Motif of good & bad*

*Motif of enemy*

*Motif of shame*

*Motif of despising*

*Motif of shadow*

*Motif of moral character*

*Motif of selfishness*

*Motif of principles*

*Motif of impulses*

...a woman can only do that in the rarest cases. She can neither be as gaily sensual, nor as spiritually free as man; her state is always a mixture of sensual and spiritual. Her heart desires to enchain man permanently, while she herself is ever subject to the desire for change. The result is conflict, and thus usually against her wishes lies and deception enter into her actions and personality and corrupt her character....But the world likewise demands it.

98

Women are neither as *good* as their admirers and defenders maintain, nor as *bad* as their enemies make them out to be. *Woman's character is characterlessness.* The best women will momentarily go down into the mire, and the worst unexpectedly rises to deeds of greatness and goodness and puts to shame those that despise her. No woman is so good or so bad, but that at any moment she is capable of the

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<sup>191</sup> Szasz, T. (1975). Pain and pleasure: A study of bodily feelings. New York: Basic.

**most diabolical as well as of the most divine, of the filthiest as well as of the purest, thoughts, emotions, and actions. In spite of all the advances of civilization, woman has remained as she came out of the hand of nature. She has the nature of a savage, who is faithful or faithless, magnanimous or cruel, according to the impulse that dominates at the moment. Throughout history it has always been a serious deep culture which as produced moral character. Man even when he is selfish or evil always follows *principles*, woman never follows anything but impulses.**

Interestingly, many of the emotions which are evidenced within the works of both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch are emotions which are not usually thought to be desirable. However, the desirability of emotions is a social construction. Contemporary emphasis on the acquisition of happiness through the acquisition of product is but one example of the shaping of emotion through the social funnel. Sociologist Carolyn Ellis has authored numerous works on the sociology of emotion arguing that the study of emotion is a valid and necessary component in understanding "the individual processing of meaning as well as socially shared cognitions" and that emotion may be studied the analysis of "private processing...of memory, detail, feeling, recognition, physiological response, language, cognition, and tone of voice" <sup>192</sup> (p. 25).

Nietzsche too recognizes the incorporation of Shadow elements within the personality: we all "occasionally glisten in all the colors of distress, green and grey with disgust...gloominess,

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<sup>192</sup> Ellis, C. (1991). Sociological introspection and emotional experience. *Symbolic Interaction*. 14 (1), 23 - 50.

and loneliness...<sup>193</sup> (p. 226). This passage illustrates the ability of individuals to draw upon the Shadow elements of the personality. Further, the insights into social restrictions through gender construction is still an issue with contemporary feminists.

Roland Barthes, in his work entitled *The World of Wrestling*, touches upon some crucial aspects of perception and understanding. Barthes sees the wrestling event as "a wrestled performance of Suffering" (p. 15). The observer of the "spectacle" witnesses "the transient image of passions" (p. 16) and the wrestler witnessed "is not to win...[but] to go exactly through the motions which are expected of him" (p. 16). The expected image represented in the body of the wrestler is "an intelligible representation of moral situations which are usually private" (18). What is displayed "is the great spectacle of Suffering, Defeat, and Justice" (p. 19).

...Exhibition of Suffering...is the very aim of the fight. This is why all the actions which produce suffering are particularly spectacular, like the gesture of a conjuror who holds out his card clearly to the public. Suffering which appeared without intelligible cause would not be understood; a concealed action that was actually cruel would transgress the unwritten rules of wrestling and would not be understood....[and] suffering appears as inflicted with emphasis and conviction, for everyone must not only see that the man suffers, but also and above all understand why he suffers. What wrestlers call a hold, that is, any figure which allows one to immobilize the adversary indefinitely and to have him at one's mercy, has precisely the function of preparing in a conventional, and therefore intelligible, fashion the spectacle of suffering....The inertia of the

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<sup>193</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). *Beyond good and evil*. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). *Basic writings of Nietzsche* (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

vanquished allows the (temporary) victor to settle in his cruelty and to convey to the public this terrifying slowness of the torturer who is certain about the outcome of his actions....[W]restling is the only sport which gives such an externalized image of torture....[However] the spectator does not wish for the actual suffering of the contestant; he enjoys only the perfection of an iconography. It is not true that wrestling is a sadistic spectacle: it is only an intelligible spectacle <sup>194</sup> (p. 19/20).

The insights Barthes puts forward in regard to wrestling are useful in this enquiry because Barthes indicates 1) the realm of authentic suffering may be removed from the realm of represented suffering, 2) that that which may be interpreted at first sight to be sadistic may *not* be sadistic, 3) interpretation and representation, intention and meaning are all inextricably bound together in a process in which the observer and the performer engage. This is not unlike the work of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. Their characters engage in activities which may be, and have been, interpreted in way contrary to those put forward within this work.

That suffering is considered to be an undesirable experience in the contemporary world influences the understanding of the works of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. Moore suggests that:

Care of the soul speaks to the longings we feel and to the symptoms that drive us crazy, but it is not a path away from shadow or death. A soulful personality is complicated, multifaceted, and shaped by both pain and pleasure... <sup>195</sup> (p. xvi).

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<sup>194</sup> Barthes, R. (1995). Mythologies. A. Lavers (Trans.). Toronto: Harper Collins. (Original work published 1957)

<sup>195</sup> Moore, T. (1992). Care of the soul: A guide for cultivating depth and sacredness in everyday life. New York: HarperCollins.

Moore realizes that the balance of the Shadow with ego is essential to spiritual growth. The suffering which is crucial to the experience Severin constellates may be viewed as a gesture toward *growth* in the fashion which Moore writes of suffering above.

Strong words about gender differences, innate gender differences. Sacher-Masoch writes about the natural differences between men and women. Men are rational, women irrational. Men follow principles, no matter how debauched they are, but women only follow impulses. When Severin exclaims that he wishes to be irrational earlier in the work, we may now read that he wishes to be immersed with the feminine realm. He further, rejects, the realm of the masculine, into which he has ascribed status. He rejects his sex/gender qualities in favor of worshipping the other which he finds highly erotically charged. The negation of the self within the erotic dynamic is what Severin proposes, seeks, and for which he lusts.

## CHAPTER XI

101

Wanda's friend has left, and the relation between Severin and Wanda intensifies, as though the arrival of the friend has some how made Wanda  
**save up all her love**  
until the friend departs. While discussing their relationship, Wanda suggests that she may be able to sustain the relation indefinitely provided she be able to have extra-marital affairs.

**102/103**

*Motif of faithfulness*

*Motif of pain*

*Motif of ecstasy*

*Motif of deception*

*Motif of truth*

**I believe....that to hold a man permanently, it is vitally important not to be faithful to him.**

Severin agrees:

**There is a painful stimulus in the unfaithfulness of a beloved woman. It is the highest kind of ecstasy.**

Wanda continues:

**I don't like deception, I am honest, but what man exists who can support the burden of truth.**

Wanda refers to the agony of truth.

The two continue to discuss and negotiate their relationship.

Severin unceasingly requests to be Wanda's slave. He suggests that they relocate to a culture wherein slavery is still legal, so their relation can be sanctioned by law. In this sense it is reminiscent of marriage vows which too, make relations legal.

**107**

*Motif of contract / agreement*

**She has drawn up a contract according to which I gave my word of honor and agree under oath to be her slave, as long as she wishes.**

**109**

**I have thought things over. What special value would there be in owning a slave where everyone owns slaves. What I want is to *have a slave, I alone*, here in our civilized sober, Philistine world, and a slave who submits helplessly to my power solely on account of my beauty and personality, not because of law....**

## CHAPTER XII

114

The chapter begins with the flirtatious event between Wanda and a Russian Prince. Severin is called to slave duty by aiding Wanda in the seductive process - he must

*Motif of seduction*

**find out....the prince's name, residence, and circumstances...**

Within this chapter, Severin is offered the opportunity to call a halt to the relationship. He is reluctant to do so. Interestingly, the slave nature of his status allows him to display emotions liberally. He is viewed by Wanda not as a man, but as a child.

## CHAPTER XIII

122

Wanda declares: *You [Severin] are not the man for me.* Severin, attempts to dissolve the relation, but Wanda, taking Severin at his word, continues the relation as agreed:

*Motif of identity construction*

*Motif of slave*

**You forget that it is no longer a question as to whether you satisfy me as a man; as a *slave* you will doubtless do well enough.**

**Madame! I exclaimed, aghast.**

**That is what you will call me in the future...The day after to-morrow I shall start for Italy, and you will accompany me as my servant....I forbid any sort of familiarity....likewise you are not to come unless I ring for you, and you are not to speak until you are spoken to. From now on your name is no longer Severin but *Gregor* (Original emphasis).**

In effect, Wanda is rewriting Severin's identity, changing his biography, his *name*. The social construction of identity is a complex production. As Phillips points out, the name in conjunction with the construction of biography is strategic.<sup>196</sup> The relation between Wanda and Severin is shifting to the one which Severin had *claimed* he wanted. He is to be reduced to the status of slave, servant. Nietzsche suggests that the slave "morality" :

'Enlightenment' enrages: for the slave wants the unconditional; he understands only what is tyrannical, in morals, too; he loves as he hates, without nuance, to the depths, to the point of pain, of sickness...<sup>197</sup> (p. 251).

Looking at Severin's request to be Wanda's slave, it does indeed seem, as Nietzsche indicates, that it is the realm of the unconditional which Severin desires.

125

They set out for travel, Severin/Gregor attends to the wishes of the mistress and while she travels first class, he is reduced to third class travel

134

*Motif of dreams*

*Motif of enactment*

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<sup>196</sup> Phillips, M. (1994). Proper names and the social construction of biography: The negative case of laboratory animals. *Quantitative Sociology*, 17 (2), 119-142.

<sup>197</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). Beyond good and evil. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). *Basic writings of Nietzsche* (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).



**I can see you are more than an ordinary dreamer, you don't remain far in arrears of your dreams; you are the sort of man who is ready to carry his dreams onto effect, no matter how mad they are.**

Certainly this kind of fearlessness is highly undesirable for the smooth maintenance of social order. But later, Wanda articulates various historical social orders wherein self sacrifice was considered desirable and noble:

**I actually believe that under unusual circumstances, in a period of great deeds, what seems to be your weakness would reveal itself as extraordinary power. Under the early emperors you would have been a martyr, at the time of the Reformation an anabaptist, during the French Revolution one of those inspired Girondists who mounted the guillotine with the Marseilles on their lips....**

Wanda gestures to cross-cultural differences in attitudes towards relations and the treatment of the body. Wanda anticipates that the treatment which she offered Severin/Gregor during the trip would satisfy his desires for slavery and that they could take up a reasonable relation. However, Severin claims that the trip and his position have inflamed his desire. They both fade in and out of their respective sexual characters.

#### CHAPTER XIV

Chapter fourteen begins with Severin's dream, a dream which was emotionally-laden to the point that he admits waking with a scream. He finds himself at the North Pole. He is then at the extreme of the world, isolated, and cold, without feeling. Without life, and he is trying to find his way out of the condition. The one who offers information that helps him is the

waiter/servant from the night before. The motif of the Inuit and reindeer is reminiscent of the mistress/slave relation which he desires, the human/animal division. Wanda appears, she skates, which indicates that her ability to manoeuvre this terrain is more agile and easier than his. She kisses him and his blood flows. She brings warmth and life. But she changes to an indigenous animal, a deadly polar bear, the embrace is mixed with danger, and the human/animal division one again evidenced. As Nietzsche points out

What occurred in the light, goes on in the dark: but the other way around, too. What we experience in dreams...belongs in the end just as much to the overall economy of our soul as anything experienced "actually": we are richer or poorer on account of it...

<sup>198</sup> (p. 296)

**142**

*Motif of the martyr*

*Motif of suffering as natural*

*Motif of absolute power*

*Motif of agreement*

*Motif of death*

Significantly Wanda declares:

**Man was born to suffer...**

As Anshen suggests, it is the "individual person alone [who] has the conscious capacity to bear suffering. <sup>199</sup> (p. 3).

The second illustration of the book is positioned here, entitled:

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<sup>198</sup> Nietzsche, F. (1968). *Beyond good and evil*. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and Trans.). *Basic writings of Nietzsche* (pp. 179-436). New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1886).

<sup>199</sup> Anshen, R. (1972). *Anatomy of Evil*. Mt. Kisco, New York: Moyer Bell.

**"...Wanda appears, holding a lighted torch."**

147

**So that you may know what it means to be absolutely in my power, I have drafted a second agreement in which you declare that you have decided to kill yourself. In that way I can even kill you, if I so desire.**

Here Wanda takes a greater control of Severin/Gregor in that she becomes the agent, the godly agent, which is responsible for the time of death. And the guise of suicide is interesting too.

Wanda and Severin/Gregor negotiate two contracts; one as the slave contract, wherein Severin/Gregor ultimately becomes the property of Wanda, and two, Severin's declaration of the intention to complete suicide. The ceiling painted with Samson and Delilah is a parallel to the relations between Wanda and Severin/Gregor. The contracts are signed, and Severin/Gregor is bound by Wanda and three servants who are evidently in the service of Wanda. The implication is that Severin/Gregor is to be whipped:

152

**Give me the whip, Haydee...[and t]he negress hands it to her mistress, kneeling.**

Frear's feature motion picture *The Grifters* <sup>200</sup> offers the following monologue:

**Grifters, huh? You're one, alright! Grifter's got an irresistible urge to beat a guy that's *wise*. There's nothin' to whippin' a fool. Hell, fools are *made* to be whipped. But to take another pro, even your partner, who *knows* you, and has his *eye* on you, now that's a**

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<sup>200</sup> Scorsese, M. (Producer), & Frears, S. (Director). (1990). *The grifters*. [Film]. Toronto: Cineplex Odeon Video

score...no matter what happens.

The attitude displayed in this quotation above reflects the "moral of the story" which will be evidenced later in this present work.

#### CHAPTER XV

This chapter consists of the events of servitude which Severin/Gregor experiences

#### CHAPTER XVI

This chapter begins yet again with a dream:

**163**

*Motif of the dream*

*Motif of violence*

*Motif of emotion (jealousy)*

*Motif of judgment*

*Motif of death*

*Motif of emotion (sadness)*

*Motif of humiliation*

*Motif of torture*

**[I] dreamed that I murdered Wanda in a violent attack of jealousy. I was condemned to death, and saw myself strapped on the board; the knife fell, I felt it on my neck, but I was still alive -**

**164**

**Tears fill my eyes, and I feel that she has humiliated me so deeply, that she doesn't even find it worth while to torture or maltreat me any further.**

While much of the work revolves around humiliation, it has not been mentioned prior as a consideration. Explicit in this passage is the notion that cruelty is an entertainment.

Bakhtin suggests that

To degrade is to bury, to sow, and to kill simultaneously, in order to bring forth something more and better. To degrade also means to concern oneself with the lower stratum of the body, the life of the belly and the reproductive organs; it therefore relates to acts of defecation and copulation, conception, pregnancy, and birth. Degradation digs a bodily grave for a new birth; it has not only a destructive, negative aspect, but also a regenerating one <sup>201</sup> (p. 21).

However, when bodies come to

...acquire a private, individual nature....they are rendered petty and homely and become immovable parts of private life, the goal of egotistic lust and possession. This is no longer the positive, regenerating and renewing lower stratum, but a blunt and deathly obstacle to ideal aspirations. In the private sphere of isolated individuals the images of the bodily lower stratum preserve the element of negation while losing almost entirely the positive regenerating force (p. 23).

In this sense, as mentioned earlier in this work, one may regard the degradation of Severin to be highly individualistic and without the positive elements of the carnivalesque setting of the characters of de Sade.

165

*Motif of insanity*

**Am I mad or is she?**

The notion of health and illness, sanity and insanity, measured by collective agreed-upon behaviours. The statistically deviant act considered insane due to the rarity of it. Yet our

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<sup>201</sup> Bakhtin, M. (1984). Rabelais and his world (H. Iswolsky Trans.). Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press. (Original work published 1965)

culture purports to value uniqueness. How is this reconcilable?

172

After several accounts of increasingly extreme incidents revolving around punishment and discomfort, Severin offers the following observation:

*Motif of transformation*

*Motif of betrayal*

**Every evening after dinner she now has me called. I have to read to her, and she discusses with me all sorts of interesting problems and subjects. She seems entirely transformed; it is as if she were ashamed of the savagery which she betrayed to me and of the cruelty with which she treated me.**

That our actions can be surprising is insightful here. Mead's agencies of the "I" and the "me" may be useful in determining spontaneous acts versus predictable acts, those acts which are synonymous with the self-concept. So too considerations of impulsivity are indicated here.

## CHAPTER XVII

This chapter begins with the admission from Wanda that she no longer loves Severin/Gregor. She wonders if she will become entirely despotic and cruel when the sympathy she feels for Severin/Gregor also leaves her, as she anticipates that it will. She expects that Severin's love for her will also dissipate, and at that time, she will offer Severin's freedom from slavery. Simmel offers insights into slavery, freedom, free will, within social relationships, which influences social distance or social connectedness:

Almost all relations - of the state, the party, the family, of friendship or love - quite naturally, as it were, seem to be on an inclined plane: if they were left to themselves, they would extend their claims over the whole of man. They are, often uncannily, surrounded by an ideal halo from which the individual must explicitly mark off some reserve of forces, devotions, and interests that he has taken away from these relations. But it is not only through the extensity of claims that the egoism of every sociation threatens the freedom of the individuals engaged in it. It does so also through the relentlessness of the claim itself, which is one-tracked and monopolistic. Usually, each claim presses its rights in complete and pitiless indifference to other interests and duties, no matter whether they be in harmony or in utter incompatibility with it. It thus limits the individual's freedom as much as does the large number of the claims on him. In the face of this nature of our relations, freedom emerges as a continuous process of liberation, as a fight, not only for our independence, but also for the right, at every moment and of our own free will, to remain *dependent*. This fight must be renewed after every victory. Thus, the absence of relations, as a negative social behavior, is almost never a secure possession but an incessant release from ties which actually limit the autonomy of the individual or which ideally strive to do so <sup>202</sup> (p. 121).

If freedom is thwarted through relationship, by the very nature of relation and compromise, then perhaps the wilful acceptance of domination, restricted freedom, offers the perception of autonomy to the one who relinquishes the freedom. In Sacher-Masoch's novel, Severin may be viewed as autonomous, powerful, in control of his destiny, through the deliberate deference to Wanda which he constellates. By *choosing*

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<sup>202</sup> Simmel, G. (1950). The isolated individual and the dyad. In K. Wolff (Ed.), The sociology of Georg Simmel (pp. 118-144). New York: Free Press. (Original work published (1906) Original emphasis.

restriction, Severin acts *wilfully*, even though the ultimate outcome of the choice appears to be loss of freedom.

Wanda suggests that she does not want to have a slave in an environment which *allows* slaves. Foucault identifies the bounding qualities of the law in the interrogative observation: "...are we not sure to find...the sombre law that always says no?"<sup>203</sup> (p. 72). In this sense Wanda wants relations which involve ways of relating which are not sanctioned, fall outside the legal boundaries. Wanda wants relations which represent to enactment of the "no" of law.

**184**

*Motif of reflection*

*Motif of the permanent*

**I pointed to the mirror.  
Ah, that is really beautiful [gazing at their own reflection],...too bad one can't capture the moment and make it permanent.**

Questions of mortality and immortality are raised. The rupture of death, or change, or permanence, universality.

A few lines later Severin articulates:

**185**

*Motif of horror*

*Motif of death*

**The idea fills me with a horror of death, of annihilation.**

von Franz suggests that

[p]aradoxically enough, in coming close to the Self there emanates from it an attraction to it and, at the same time, a fear of it. The fear of death is thereby in

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<sup>203</sup> Foucault, M. (1990). The history of sexuality: Volume 1: An introduction. New York: Vintage. (Original work published 1976)



the last analysis a fear of the Self and of the final inner confrontation with the Self <sup>204</sup> (p. 60).

In von Franz's opinion then, fear of death is fear of meeting the Self, which is a term which refers to a psychic agency within each individual which may be viewed as the central unconscious ordering principle of the whole psyche, overseeing, as it were, both conscious and unconscious elements of the psyche.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### 189/190

Wanda has allowed a painter to paint her portrait. Events unfold in such a way that the painter, as with Severin/Gregor, desires to be maltreated, whipped. It is as though the kernel of despotism which was nurtured and fostered by Severin/Gregor is now flourishing and spreading to other relations in which Wanda engages.

Another illustration is presented between pages 190 and 191. It depicts the negress of the previous chapters pricking with pins the flesh of the bound and naked slave. The caption is unreadable, cropped too low. Only the extreme top the the text is visible, indicating that this visual was also titled as were the others.

### 193

*Motif of success*

*Motif of documentation*

*Motif of the supernatural*

*Motif of the diabolical*

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<sup>204</sup> von Franz, M. L. (1987). On dreams and death (E. Kennedy & V. Brooks, Trans.), (2nd ed.). Boston: Shambala.  
(Original work published 1984)

**The painting is marvelously successful. It is a portrait which as far as the likeness goes couldn't be better, and at the same time it seems to have an ideal quality. The colors glow, are supernatural; almost diabolical...**

This passage gestures to repetitive themes evident throughout this work: Real life, a hyper-real life which is the enactment, documentation, of an ideal, an impossibility of life, in life. the representation of life becomes **supernatural,** and takes on a *moral* quality represented by the presence of the **diabolical.**

**194**

*Motif of virtue*

*Motif of empathy*

*Motif of agreement*

**I am really rather sorry for the poor painter, [said Wanda] it is absurd to be as virtuous as I am. Don't you think so too?**

This sentence uttered by Wanda indicates the shift in attitude she undergoes during the work; her self-contempt for the caring and virtue which had been her stance at the beginning of the work.

Wanda takes the carriage out, and comes upon a man:

**195**

*Motif of the lion*

*Motif of virility / manliness*

**As soon as he sees Wanda, he stops his horse and makes it walk. When he is quite close, he stops entirely and lets her pass. And she too sees him - the**

**lioness, the lion. Their eyes meet...For he is, indeed, a magnificent specimen of man. No, rather, he is a man whose like I have never yet seen among the living.**

The attraction of equals is that which is described in the passage above; animal magnetism.

Wanda commands Severin/Gregor to gather information about the desired fellow:

**197**

*Motif of age*

*Motif of atheism*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of bravery*

**Scarcely older than you. They say he was educated in Paris, and that he is an atheist. He fought against the Turks in Candia, and is said to have distinguished himself there no less by his race-hatred and cruelty, than by his bravery.**

**All in all, then, a man, she cried with sparkling eyes.**

#### CHAPTER XIX

The "lion" is received by the "lioness". Severin/Gregor is requested to serve the two. Like Severin's response to servitude in general, to serve the two is attractive and repulsive simultaneously.

**202**

*Motif of suicide*

**He is a man who is like a woman; he knows that he is beautiful, and he acts accordingly....In Paris he appeared first in women's dress, and the men assailed him with love-letters. An Italian singer....threatened to commit suicide if he wouldn't be his.**

**I am sorry....I should like to do you the favor, but you will have to carry out your threat, for I am a man.**

The difference here, is that this man knows his masculinity, and recognized the feminine aspect of masculinity, the inherent duality in each, socially defined, gender.

205

*Motif of absence*

**During the day she remained locked in her room, and had the negress attend her.**

It is as though the relation between Wanda and Severin becomes authentic in the way Severin is regarded totally, behaves completely, as a slave, and yet, the relation becomes increasingly distant, nonexistent. It is the paradox of being related and non-being. Reik discusses the paradoxical notion of masochism and suggests that the *wilfulness* of the desire to experience passivity, impotence, submission to an "Other", cruelty, humiliation, shame, and sexual excitement in relation to these aforementioned conditions of Reik's definition of masochism: the paradoxical nature of masochism as understood by Reik is not framed as "absurd" but rather "contradictory". Indeed Reik is insightful when he states that the "masochist aims at the same pleasure we all do, but he arrives at it by another road....He submits voluntarily to punishment, suffering, and humiliations, and thus has defiantly purchased the right to enjoy the gratification denied before" <sup>205</sup> (p. 428).

The impossible position in which Severin places Wanda, that is, to be involved, and not involved simultaneously, to be

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<sup>205</sup> Reik, T. (1941). Masochism in modern man (M. Beigel & G. Kurth, Trans.). New York: Farrar & Rinehart.

caring and rejecting simultaneously, seems to gesture to being present and absent simultaneously, within the relationship.

It is as though Severin expects and demands a paradoxically impossible positioning of Wanda: to be present and absent at the same time. By requiring the impossible, Severin's position is not unlike de Sade in that the satisfaction of desire is secondary to the condition of desire, wanting, itself, prior to satisfaction. If Severin wants the impossible; he will never be satisfied.

While the aforementioned motifs often prove to be relational structures which evidence the Shadow, so too is the relational structure of sadomasochism rich with Shadow potentialities.

Wanda admits that she intends to marry the "lion"

208

...if he will have me.

Wanda appears to be entirely removed from the relationship with Severin. It is as though he has truly become her slave, and she treats him with the contempt and dismissal appropriate to the relations between mistress and slave.

## CHAPTER XX

While Severin himself has instructed, concocted, and persuaded Wanda to engage him in such a relation, the chapter begins with the following quote:

211

*Motif of determination / freedom / agency*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of betrayal*

*Motif of slave*

*motif of devotion*

*Motif of suffering*

*Motif of emotion (love)*

*Motif of insanity*

*Motif of the sacred*

*Motif of emotion*

*Motif of imprudence*

*Motif of the game*

*Motif of the indignant*

*Motif of emotion (hate)*

*motif of despising*

**I have determined to set myself free from this heartless woman, who has treated me so cruelly, and is now about to break faith and betray me, as a reward for all my slavish devotion, for everything I have suffered from her. I packed by few belongings into a bundle, then wrote her as follows:**

**Dear Madam, -**

**I have loved you even to madness, I have given myself to you as no man ever has given himself to a woman. You have abused my most sacred emotions, and played an imprudent, frivolous game with me. However, as long as you were merely cruel and merciless, it was still possible for me to love you. Now you are about to become *cheap*. I am no longer the slave whom you can kick about and whip. You yourself have set me free and I am leaving a woman I can only hate and despise.**

The profound absence of any responsibility associated with the constellation of the relationship indicates the lack of accountability Severin has for his own behaviour. Severin leaves, but then remembers the bond and his word of honour, confirming his allegiance until *she*, Wanda, releases him.

Reik discusses agency and freedom of the masochist.

According to his model of masochism the essence of masochism

is "victory through defeat" <sup>206</sup> (p. 429) wherein the masochist "revers[es the] essential psychological elements....of punishment and gratification" <sup>207</sup> (p. 429). The retreat from the relation which Severin indicates in his letter may be seen as a kind of victory, an emancipation. But Reik implies that the masochist is fully in control of the events experienced in that

[h]e lets his opponent, sadism, taste all the pleasure of the hour - he even joins in the feast - but he patiently waits for the moment to bring the great turn....masochism is sadism in retreat, but with the inner expectancy of the ultimate push forward....The martyr and even the saint, anticipating in their tortures and sacrifices the impending ascent into paradise, look at them as a sort of imaginary advance on the coming eternal happiness (p.429/430).

Reik sees sadism and masochism not as opposite polarities, but as different stages of dominance, with the masochist anticipating a transcending moment. Interestingly, Severin's dominance over his domestic (21/22) indicate his attitude and relations with women. Since the book is a retrospective look at his relations with Wanda / Venus, the relationship evidenced in real time at the beginning of the work illustrates the present relational condition. As Reik suggests, his position has reversed as he adopts a domineering position over his domestic.

Severin contemplates suicide, which gives way to reminiscing about his former friends and acquaintances, relationship which have defunct, as the other participants have now died.

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<sup>206</sup> Reik, T. (1941). Masochism in modern man (M. Beigel & G. Kurth, Trans.). New York: Farrar & Rinehart.

<sup>207</sup> *ibid.*

Having returned to the residence with Wanda, he dialogues with her. She offers him money to leave, which he refuses. He *desires* to stay, though he indicates that he *can't* leave, rather than *won't* leave.

## CHAPTER XXI

217

Wanda is rowing with her "lion" in the garden. He leaves, and Severin,

[L]ying among the bushes

steps out and appears to her suddenly, replicating the motif of Wanda's appearance for the first time, in the garden moonlight.

218

*Motif of freedom / volition*

*Motif of master*

*Motif of slave*

*Motif of adoration*

**I see, my dear lady, too, has found a master.  
Yes, thank God!...not a new slave, I have had enough  
of them. A master! Woman needs a master, and she  
adores him.**

Severin states that he wishes to continue to be her slave, but Wanda indicates that the "lion" won't agree to it, since they are in some kind of relation. Wanda restates her desire for a dominant man.

220

*Motif of danger*

*Motif of potential*

**Dangerous potentialities were slumbering in me, but  
you were the first to awaken them....**



**221**

*Motif of authenticity*

*Motif of emotion (love)*

*Motif of relationship as transitory / temporal*

**Had you been the man I first thought you were, serious, reserved, stern, I would have loved you faithfully, and become your wife. Woman demands that she can look up to a man, but one like you who voluntarily places his neck under her foot, she uses as a welcome plaything, only to toss it aside when she is tired of it.**

Wanda continues, suggesting that she may offer Severin to her future husband as a slave. Severin becomes so incensed with the idea of losing Wanda that he

**222**

*Motif of force*

*Motif of ownership / possession*

**...seized her by the waist and forced her to her ground, so that she lay on her knees before me....I shall kill you if you marry him....You are mine, I won't let you go, I love you too much.**

**223**

*Motif of emotion (love)*

**Wanda fixed a large, calm, incomprehensible look on me. I like you that way,...Now you are a man, and at this moment I know I still love you.**

Wanda and Severin agree to marry, an event associated with the declaration and solidification of relations pertaining to romantic love.

**224**

## CHAPTER XXII

Wanda calls for Severin. There is a shift in their relation as he is no longer her slave. But she inflicts **punishment** nonetheless, and he is excited by it, even requests it. But once again the tables turn, and the "lion" appears from behind the curtains of the four poster bed. Severin is amazed.

**231**

*Motif of emotion (love)*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of value*

**You are indeed cruel [said the "lion"]....  
Only inordinately fond of pleasure....Pleasure alone  
lends value to existence.**

The motif of pleasure is particularly interesting in the works of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch in that *displeasure* is a key element in the pleasurable experience. In de Sade, the displeasure is experienced by "The Other" but is relatively unimportant to the "friends". What is interesting is the disregard of "The Other". The term "sadism" in contemporary usage carries with it the connotation that one receives enjoyment *from* the discomfort of "The Other". In fact, the work of de Sade does not focus on the discomfort of "The Other" but on the gratification, the pleasuring, of the "friend". Much of the pleasure in de Sade comes from gratification of basic needs, particularly eating, and sex.

In Sacher-Masoch's *Venus in Furs* the pleasure is in the distance between desire and satisfaction, in de Sade, it is found *in*

the satiation itself, the satisfying of the desire. Neither author places the focus on the actual relationship, though Sacher-Masoch's characters are related, though de Sade's are not. Though it could be argued that the storyteller's situation shifts within the text, and that she, indeed, becomes related to the friends. This shift occurs because she is obedient, and has complied with the desires of the "friends" and as such, will be rewarded. But the very fact that she is to be treated differently, as a result of her storytelling, indicates there is relation.

Though Wanda states that she is fond of pleasure, and the response of Severin at the suggestion that he is to be whipped by his rival, is one of humor, laughter. But this laughter differs from the response to fear and terror of which Bakhtin writes; the laughter is ironic, and as such, is associated, according to Bakhtin, to the realm of the negative.

Another interesting point is that both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch's characters engage in acts which to some degree are recognizable as being pleasurable, but are largely comprised of acts, activities, and ideologies which are usually considered unpleasurable.

The motif of violation is ubiquitous in both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. The positions of the characters in the works varies greatly in terms of their perspective of the violations within the works. That de Sade omits the details of the transgressions mentioned in the work at several points, as well as the descriptions of violations which do appear in the writing,

suggests that the focus of the de Sade characters who inflict violations upon others, is for *their own* gratification and satisfaction. The attitude of the de Sade characters is amusement, which again, points to a self-centeredness.

'Form' in art [for example literary works such as *Venus in Furs* and *120 Days of Sodom*] ...is particularly active in expressing and conveying a system of values [which is] a function that follows from the very nature of communication as an exchange of meaningful messages <sup>208</sup> (p. viii)

In this regard the reader is presented a value system with the fictional work. On the one hand the dominance of the female within the dyadic relation is unusual in that "[i]n most of the higher species of animals, including [humans], the male is habitually more aggressive than the female" <sup>209</sup> (p. 85) and the wilful submission of Severin is typically uncharacteristic of male behaviour within the heterosexual dyad. However, that the motif of heterosexual dyadic relations evidences one dominant and one submissive within the relation suggests, on the other hand, that the motif of dominant/submissive is maintained within Sacher-Masoch's work; the gender of the dominant and submissive have been inverted. Storr's explanation that "the regressive wish to be cared for by a powerful figure is common to both sexes" <sup>210</sup> (p. 92) seems inadequate in terms of explaining the repeated requests for behaviours which indicate a devaluation of the submissive such

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<sup>208</sup> Pomorska, K. (1984). Forward. In Bakhtin, M. (1984). Rabelais and his world (H. Iswolsky Trans.). Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press. (Original work published 1965)

<sup>209</sup> Storr, A. (1987). Human aggression. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin. (Original work published 1968)

<sup>210</sup> *ibid.*

as Severin repeatedly requests from Wanda.

**231/232**

*Motif of enjoyment*

*Motif of antiquity / modernity*

*Motif of slave*

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of remorse*

*Motif of power*

*Motif of opposites*

**But whoever wants to enjoy must take life gaily in the sense of the ancient world; he dare not hesitate to enjoy at the expense of others....[h]e must know how to make slaves of men who feel and would enjoy as he does, and use them for his service and pleasure without remorse. It is not his affair whether they like it, or whether they go to rack and ruin. He must always remember this, that if they had him in their power, as he has them they would act in exactly the same way....That was the world of the ancients: pleasure and cruelty, liberty and slavery went hand in hand.**

The "lion" does indeed whip Severin. This is a significant cue in terms of the criteria which need to be in place for Severin to enjoy his slave position. That the event with the "lion" is not pleasurable for Severin indicates that it is imperative that the event of subjugation be in relation to someone; the connectedness between the dyadic members must be significant. If the slave status alone was sufficient, the discomfort, the pain, humiliation, then the event with the "lion" would be charged as are the event with Wanda. But the event with the "lion" pales by comparison because he and Severin are only in relationship through their mutual desire for Wanda.

**234**

*Motif of the temporal*

*Motif of passion*

*Motif of lust*

*Motif of emotion (love)*

*Motif of betrayal*

**The picture....seemed....an eternal parable of passion and lust, of the love of a man for a woman. Each one of us in the end is a Samson....and ultimately for better or worse is betrayed by the woman he loves....**

**235**

The "lion" is interchangeably acknowledged as "The Greek" but now also referred to as "Apollo", a complimentary term for the Wanda/Venus duality.

As the "lion"/"Apollo" whips Severin, on and on, the whipping gives way to a crucial insight:

**235**

*Motif of understanding*

*Motif of suffering*

*Motif of slave*

*Motif of death*

**All of a sudden I saw with horrible clarity whither blind passion and lust have led man....into a blind alley, into the net of woman's treachery, into misery, slavery and death.**

It is Sacher-Masoch who articulates the changeability of relations. Life, the development from birth to death, allows the individual a number of possibilities, and if encouraged, produces a number of different considerations, positions. Both de Sade, and Sacher-Masoch have produced works which appear to

exemplify relations removed from the assumptions of normative social relations.

Philippe Ariès writes of the erotic meaning of death. Death was romanticized by the end of the 18th century and the tortured dying were regarded as beautiful. Both the dying, and those in proximity to the dying, had previously engaged in traditions which were enacted as part of a death ritual. The customary character with which they had been enacted previously began to take on an emotional response. Dying as the natural conclusion to the life cycle, an event which was inevitable and *part* of the life cycle became increasingly charged with emotion. Ariès writes:

Like the sexual act, death was henceforth increasingly thought of as a transgression which tears man from his daily life, from rational society, from his monotonous work in order to make him undergo a paroxysm, plunging him into an irrational, violent, and beautiful world <sup>211</sup> (p. 57).

Death may be viewed as the termination of life, the ending, and as such, as in the work of de Sade, it represents the termination of the need for corporal satiation. But the link between death and sexuality suggests that sex, like death, is regarded as a condition in which the rationalized structure of everyday life is replaced with an "irrational, violent, and beautiful world".

Severin's conclusion about the process of love is that love leads to death, and a painful process it is at that. One is reminded of the paradox of the grotesque body as outlined by Bakhtin. Love

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<sup>211</sup> Ariès, P. (1974). Western attitudes toward death from the middle ages to the present. P. Ranum, (Trans.). London: Johns Hopkins.

and death are inextricably linked.

Freud postulated a death drive, Thanatos. His theoretical model of masochism involves primary (the direct expression of the Thanatos drive when the object is self) and secondary (the turning upon oneself sadistic impulses) masochism.<sup>212</sup> Secondary masochism in the Freudian interpretation of masochism is similar to the model put forward by Reik. As a condition related to Thanatos, it may be viewed as related to death and rebirth or the symbolic meaning of death. James Hillman considers suicide from a symbolic interpretation suggesting that suicide may be a symbol indicating the ego desire for complete and rapid total transformation.<sup>213</sup>

### CHAPTER XXIII

The last chapter is a retrospective chapter, occurring three years later than the events of the previous chapter. Severin has returned to his father's home, to care for him,

237

*Motif of social responsibility*

**[t]o labor and to do my duty...**

His father dies, and Severin inherits the estate, but this induces no change in him. He has become *rational*.

He accounts receiving a package from Wanda, who declares that she did truly love him, and engaged in his requests to "cure"

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<sup>212</sup> Gordon, R. (1989). Masochism: The shadow side of the archetypal need to venerate and worship. In A. Samuels, (Ed.), Psychopathology: Contemporary Jungian Perspective. London: Karnac. (Original work published 1987)

<sup>213</sup> Hillman, J. (1993). Suicide and the soul. Dallas: Spring. (Original work published 1964).



him. She states:

**239**

*Motif of cure (health & illness)*

*Motif of extreme*

**...the cure was cruel, but radical...**

Less than a page is dedicated to the relation between Severin and Sacher-Masoch, which was established at the beginning of the book. The question:

**...the moral of the story ?**

**240**

*Motif of morals (value)*

*Motif of gender relations as naturally adversarial*

*Motif of gender relations as hierarchical*

**That woman, as nature has created her and as man is at present educating her, is his enemy. She can be his slave or his despot, but *never his companion*. This she can become only when she has the same rights as he, and is his equal in education and work....The moral of this tale is this: whoever allows himself to be whipped, deserves to be whipped.**

The work closes with the insight from Severin that he is no longer under the illusion that women are Godly. It is interesting that the work opens with the social position of "enchanted company", and closed with disillusionment, with *disenchantment*. In terms of the Shadow, it is possible to regard Severin as living out his negative qualities consciously, and repressing his positive qualities. Coming to consciousness implies a grounding, an earthing. The owning of Shadow elements, the withdrawal of projections, and the ability to

understand self and relations without projections, is difficult. It is difficult because the world view changes and that which was familiar and understood becomes uncertain and unclear initially. In this sense, the disillusionment which Severin experiences may be regarded as an indicator of growth, of change, since *disillusionment* can only occur following illusion.

Taylor's definition of morality is useful here:

'Morality', of course, can be and often is defined purely in terms of respect for others. The category of the moral is thought to encompass just our obligations to other people. But if we adopt this definition, then we have to allow that there are other questions beyond the moral which are of central concern to us, and which bring strong evaluation into play. There are questions about how I am going to live my life which touch on the issue of what kind of life is worth living, what kind of life would fulfil the promise implicit in my particular talents, or the demands incumbent on someone with my endowment, or of what constitutes a rich, meaningful life - as against one concerned with secondary matters or trivia <sup>214</sup> (p. 14).

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<sup>214</sup> Taylor, C. (1994). Source of the self: The making of the modern identity. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. (Original work published 1989)



## DISCUSSION

This exploration into the literary world of de Sade's *120 Days of Sodom* and Sacher-Masoch's *Venus in Furs* has generated a number of motifs which are useful in understanding the works. As mentioned earlier, the use of motif extracts the specific and moves the act or consideration to a generic, reduces the particular to the general.

The realm of sadomasochism is an arena of interaction between adult social actors which is rich in terms of allowing a number of diverse areas of interest to be, to varying degrees, considered and explored. In this sense the work provides a possibility of mapping the Shadow. It is important to note that the Shadow is not universal in its manifestation; Shadow contents differ culturally and individually. What is universal is the structure of Shadow: the unrecognized, unconscious elements of personality which may be integrated into the conscious. Frequently the Shadow represents potentiality and direction of growth. It is this illusive nature of the Shadow which makes the realm of the Shadow so difficult to study.

While the Shadow is difficult to study, understanding and recognizing the Shadow is an important contribution to the discipline of Sociology. It is in the realm of the social that the Shadow is evidenced. Sociology is concerned with how relations

are possible. The Shadow allows insight into the morally negative, the absent, the repressed and the rejected. One is reminded of any number of contemporary issues frequently addressed within the discipline of Sociology which attempt to explain and rectify such concerns as the ones listed above. Race relations, gender relations and sexuality, issues of equality, social problems, crime and deviance, ethics, are but some of the substantive areas which overlap with the Sociology of the Shadow and this author suggests that the recognition of the Shadow may well be useful in the ongoing inquiry into such sociological concerns.

As with any theoretical model the focus is not on whether the model is true or false but rather how useful it is.

In terms of working with the texts, I approached this inquiry rather like dream analysis: latent and manifest content made apparent through symbolism. The Sacher-Masoch document was easier to work with because the social actors in it seem more connected to each other than in the writings of de Sade. This may have been because Sacher-Masoch has characters who claim to have caring feelings towards each other (even if the display of caring occurs in behaviours which are not usually understood as those associated with fond feelings). The relationship which is described in the work is, in some respects, more similar to the normative expectations around acceptable relationship in contemporary Western culture. The two main characters

(sometimes) care about each other (though Wanda becomes disenchanted, as does Severin, with the course of the relationship). It is at Severin's repeated requests that Wanda takes the role of dominant. This role, as requested by Severin, requires a certain distance to make the erotic appeal charged. Wanda repeatedly states that her feelings for Severin are strong, that she has never felt for any other man as she does for Severin, but ultimately she begins to take on the role that Severin has requested she play. There seems to be something impossible or paradoxical about the masochistic relationship as delineated by Sacher-Masoch. Severin loves his object, Wanda loves Severin. In order for the relation to work for Severin, Wanda must distance herself from Severin. Strangely, Wanda distances herself *as* an act of love.

de Sade's characters appear to be less connected than those of Sacher-Masoch's. The sense of the work is that there is something seriously lacking. The bureaucratization and rationalization which is rife in the work makes the events appear as unrelated as the characters.

### MOTIFS

I constructed a list of "motifs" based on a thorough analysis of each book. About 300 motifs were generated in total. I then attempted to group motifs under general categorical headings so that the 300 could be made more manageable. To categorize or to

group thematically, various motifs may indeed be reductionistic. What may be preferable is a kind of legend which allows a group of methodological questions to be posed in regard to the various motifs; a kind of transferable grid which may be superimposed upon the different motifs evidenced within the works. In this way the uniqueness of each motif suffers the reductionistic outcome of categorization. However, without some kind of conceptual tool which facilitates simplification, difficulties arise in the sheer volume of motifs.

First the works, *120 Days of Sodom*, and *Venus in Furs* were read, and sections which seemed to be particularly interesting in terms of relational motifs were transcribed and analysed. More frequently the actual vocabulary drawn from the text indicated the motif which was recorded, though sometimes the text outlined motifs which were titled under a conglomerate motif title. After reading the entire text of *Venus in Furs*, and de Sade's Introduction and The First Part: The 150 Simple Passions Composing The Narration of Madame Duclos for the Month of November (p. 189 - 570), an inventory of motifs found within each text was drawn up.<sup>215</sup>

As mentioned earlier, sections of text which are pertinent to this inquiry have been selected and analyzed. As with virtually any text, the text is inexhaustible. In this sense, completion is also impossible. What is possible is a selection of considerations

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<sup>215</sup> Part the Second, Part the Third, and Part the Fourth are all "set down in the form of a journal" and as such, are little more than a listing of brutal and extreme sexualized events. These events focus very little on the *relation* between the parties involved, and as such, have been omitted from this work. (p. 573 - 674).

based upon the original texts. The selection of excerpts from the original texts is arbitrary, based upon that which resonates with this present author. Further, this author would argue that this kind of arbitrariness is the case with all texts, whether acknowledged by authors and readers, or not. Just as this present work is a possibility or reading of the original texts, so too may future researchers access these texts, engage with them, and select similar (or not) selections and come to similar (or not) considerations. What is exciting is the particular reading and considerations.

Because the inventory which *emerged* from the textual analysis is an inventory of *motifs* rather than discrete quantitatively measurable issues, categorization becomes quite difficult. The motif, by nature, is not static, but rather fluid, complex, and a lived process. It is enacted, and hence, temporal. Because of its temporality, it is difficult to categorize because it lives, moves.

The motifs which were identified in each text were numerous. Various ways of grouping the motifs were attempted. The first attempt resulted in the formation of 12 categories:

- 1) **ways of understanding or making sense of the world**
- 2) **nature and events of nature**
- 3) **evidence of suffering**
- 4) **emotions**
- 5) **representations of/on the body**
- 6) **conditions of desire**
- 7) **styles of relations between individuals**
- 8) **styles of personal presentation**
- 9) **personal agency and acts demonstrating/denying agency**
- 10) **considerations of morality**



- 11) indicators of order/non-order
- 12) considerations of the negative

After having studied the numerous individual motifs I began to notice similarities among them. I began to make a list of categories which satisfied the classification of *all* identified motifs. The list of 12 categories above worked so as to include all motifs.

These inventory categories were used for both *Venus in Furs* and *120 Days of Sodom*. This was a first attempt at categorizing the numerous motifs found within both works. The aim of forming these categories was two fold: 1) to make more manageable the many motifs, and 2) to find commonalities among the motifs so as to gain insight into the larger picture of what was to be 'found in the works'; to map a more crude (no pun) topographical "aerial" view. That which is 'found in the work' is that which is perceived within the work at any given time, by any given reader. As such, the text becomes, perhaps, virtually, inexhaustible.

While this first attempt at grouping motifs proved to be helpful in grappling with the usefulness of grouping, the actual groupings seemed to be less useful than desired. Many of the motifs which had been allocated to one category could have easily been allocated to another. The arbitrariness of categorization was not so extreme that any motif could have been allocated to any category, but often could have been represented under several different category headings. This seemed to defeat the objective

of categorization as a method of simplification.

This work, then, is a mapping of motifs found within the textual work of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch, and some considerations related to, or rather, generated by, the motifs. Just as the recognition of motifs is to some extent arbitrary, so too, the considerations, the connections to other sociological considerations and points of inquiry are arbitrary. What occurs herein is the mapping of some of the contents of the de Sadian / Sacher-Masochian world, and a selection of considerations which are generated through the textual inquiry. In this sense, the presentation here is a possible landscape, a geography, of the fluid world of sadomasochism, or that to which the sadomasochistic world gestures. Linking of sociological theoretical frameworks and considerations to the elements of the present analysis makes this inquiry more than simply an account of events. This work becomes a sociological inquiry through linking the behaviours of the subjects (the characters in the literary works) to sociological theory.

I began to play with the various categories of motifs to see whether I could condense them further, thereby reducing the overlap tendency of a single motif applied to several categories, and still retain, or improve, meaningful categories. Consequently, the motifs allocated to one of 12 "core principles" were rearranged and allocated to one of the 9 core principles listed below:

- 1) **Absence**
- 2) **Knowing**
- 3) **Identity and Identity Construction**
- 4) **Relationship**
- 5) **Hierarchy and Order**
- 6) **Freedom**
- 7) **Feeling and Emotion**
- 8) **Death**
- 9) **The Demonic and Morality**

The considerations of the negative, the realm of the Shadow I renamed as Absence. This aspect of the negative was about that which was repressed, ignored, peripheral, banished. The value aspect of the negative, the bad, **considerations of morality** was then subsumed under the core principle of The Demonic and Morality. Considerations of **ways of understanding or making sense of the world** came to include issues of nature in Knowing. Identity and Identity construction incorporated **styles of personal presentation and representations of/on the body and conditions of desire**. Evidence of suffering was subsumed under the heading of Feeling and Emotion. Personal agency was retitled to simply Freedom, styles of relations between individuals shifted to Relationship, and indicators of order/non-order became Hierarchy and Order.

While discrete categories seemed to be useful in addressing the plethora of motifs generated from this inquiry, the allocation of motif into categories which were *discrete* was problematic in that admission into one category precluded inclusion in others. If not, the intention of making more manageable the large number of motifs through categorization would be undermined with the inclusion of various motifs repeated in several/most categories.

On a technological level, the linking (representation in text) of the motifs to the quotations extracted from the original texts which are represented within this present work proved to be highly problematic. Without a detailed description of the limitations of contemporary software appropriate to word processing, suffice it to say that the linking of motifs to quotations occurred more than half a dozen times. This, while frustrating in regard to the document itself, proved to be unexpectedly useful in that familiarity with the numerous motifs significantly increased. Through the repeated linking of motifs I became quite familiar with the vast number of motifs in both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch, and through the repeated linking of motifs came to categorize the core motifs to four main realms:

- 1) **The Motif of Desire**
- 2) **The Motif of Hierarchy**
- 3) **The Motif of Morality**
- 4) **The Motif of Understanding and Identity**

I am more satisfied with these categories of motifs as core principles in that the works of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch may be readily contextualized through the application of these four main core motifs, and so too the numerous specific motifs may be generalized to one of these four categories. In other words, these four core categories appear to display the major themes found within the works and also are useful in the categorization of specific motifs without being ridiculously reductionistic.

## CORE MOTIFS

The work of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch are replete with motifs as evidenced earlier within this work. For the purpose of this work four core motifs in relation to the sociology of the Shadow will be discussed within this section: **The Motif of Desire** (which includes elements of pleasure, and satisfaction/satiation); **The Motif of Hierarchy** (or how individuals are positioned socially in relationship to each other including considerations of order, veneration, and obedience); **The Motif of Morality** (how individuals are positioned ethically in relationship to each other); **The Motif of Understanding and Identity** (the construction of the *individual* [who is always socially positioned], self understanding, reflexivity, the knowing of the self and environment in which the self finds itself).

## MOTIF OF DESIRE

Throughout both works, *120 Days of Sodom*, and *Venus in Furs*, the motif of desire is recurrent. In terms of the Shadow, desire may not take the normatively directed social channels. In some cases desire may be directed in such a way that others perceive the desire as evil. Both works evidence desire primarily around considerations of engaging, styles of engaging, with "The Other". de Sade regards "The Other" as accoutrement for the

satisfaction of desire. Sacher-Masoch outlines a more exclusive relationship (dyadic) than the relationship among the friends and between the friends and "The Other" within the Sadian setting. de Sade's desire seems to be comprised of primarily id impulses which are encouraged within the setting. Sacher-Masoch's character, Severin, is obsessed with facilitating the desire of "The Other", Wanda.

In terms of contemporary culture, consumer capitalist society also places great emphasis on the satisfaction of desire, though desire is commodified and purchased. Advertising is designed to instil desire in the viewer. Frequently, advertising plays upon what Prus & Grill define as "the deviant mystique". In this sense, the construction of commodity fetishism is enhanced by suggesting, either directly or indirectly, within advertising, that the forbidden is available through the purchase of the product. Contemporary urban Western culture, while on the one hand, emphasising the positive end of the continuum of lifestyle and relationship ignores, or pushes into the background:

[t]he intense savagery of the fighting in such diverse cultural settings as Liberia, Bosnia, the Caucasus, and Sri Lanka - to say nothing of what obtains in American inner cities - indicates something very troubling that those of us inside the stretch limo, concerned with issues like middleclass entitlements and the future of interactive cable television, lack the stomach to contemplate...It is this: a large number of people on this planet to whom the comfort and stability of a middle-class life is utterly unknown, find war and barracks existence a step up rather than a step down<sup>216</sup>  
(Kaplin in Kingwell, p.99).

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<sup>216</sup> Kingwell, M. (1996). Dreams of millennium. Toronto: Viking

The emphasis here is not so much on the alleviation of the plight of the individuals outlined within the quote above, rather the recognition of the Shadow side of the desirable urban Western lifestyle. de Sade, in painstakingly detailed fashion, outlines the Shadow side of relationship as a natural element to the enclave civilization described. Contrarily, Sacher-Masoch chronicles the desire of Severin to polarize relationship so that he experiences the Shadow side of the relation between himself and Wanda, offering Wanda only the "positive" side of relations between them. And yet this is contradictory, in that Severin derives pleasure from the Shadow side of relations. This supports the notion that the Shadow is not necessarily evil or negative in value.

Both works emphasize emotion. But the emotions of joy and happiness which may be considered the positive side of the emotional spectrum are only some of the emotions portrayed in the literary works. The full spectrum of emotions in both works play themselves out. Not only joy and happiness, but also hate, sorrow, envy, jealousy, lust, are experienced by the characters. Banalities of modern parlance such as "Have a nice day" and "Be happy" indicate the cultural emphasis on the happy pole of emotion.

Paradoxically, our era, which proclaims happiness as a universal goal, not only preoccupies itself with - even invites despair over - certain forms of suffering....At the same time, other forms of suffering, sacrifice, and

victims are disregarded and even negated.<sup>217</sup> (p. xvii)

Interestingly, even with the markedly different perspective of characters within each work, both works still present a rich conglomerate of emotional positions. Both works involve characters who become *energized* through the relations and relationships which they foster. In this sense, satisfaction may be understood not as emotion, but as active, energetic, and therefore, a *process*.

Bakhtin's analysis of folk laughter is yet another theoretical frame with which to view the works of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. The medieval understanding of the positive and negative, shifts in understanding the positive and the negative, and the protective elements of laughter against terror are useful within this present inquiry into *Shadow*. One may regard the world of de Sade as an example of the carnivalesque, the response of laughter to terror, to the realm of inversion. Sacher-Masoch's work may be seen as the absence of such framework and the elimination of positive laughter.

### MOTIF OF HIERARCHY

The concept of hierarchy is prevalent within each work also. Hierarchy is intrinsically related to order, because hierarchy is a model of order. de Sade rationalizes his debauchery so that the

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<sup>217</sup> Amato, J. (1990). Victims and values: A history and a theory of suffering. New York: Praeger.



ecstatic frenzy associated with, for example, the Dionysian orgy, is lacking within his work. Although Sacher-Masoch inverts the usual gender relations entities, the concept of power relations, an order, or hierarchy between gender, remains intact. Sacher-Masoch elevates women, and devalues the status of men. In so doing, he creates a window of insight into the position of women, since the order is ultimately reversed from the usual order of gender relations. To be sure, many intra-gendered relations do not follow the hierarchical standard of the dominant male but such relations are in contrast to the normative position of male to female.

Other hierarchical considerations in the works involve the sexual liaison of various class/status individuals. The individuals of higher class/status within de Sade's work often service individuals of lower class/status. One may regard this kind of inversion of the usual hierarchical order as a recognition of Shadow elements within social class/status.

In another sense, the intermingling of the various class/status individuals in de Sade's work may be viewed as a kind of levelling situation wherein the exclusivity of the polarized classes (which may be understood as Shadow elements of each other) are homogenized into some kind of sexualized realm of satisfaction where various class/status individuals intermingle.

Both de Sade and Sacher-Masoch not only suggest clearly alternative moral positions but also question and dismiss

important sociological institutions upon which much of traditionally established social order rests: the relational institutions of religion, marriage, and family. In this regard, these texts may be viewed as potentially dangerous, and so it is not surprising that they carry with them the ostracism still so strongly embedded in the association with the works.

Sacher-Masoch constructs a scenario wherein the venerating Severin adores and elevates the (initially reluctant) Wanda. It is the hierarchy which is crucial to Severin's satisfaction. In contemporary Western urban culture, considerations of egalitarianism are rife. As such, the ideology of egalitarianism seems to thwart the enactment of hierarchical relations. But the ideology may not articulate and consider the actual lived experience of contemporary actors. Lynn Chancer's *Sadomasochism in Everyday Life: The Dynamics of Power and Powerlessness* regards the existence of hierarchy as an essential and defining trait / condition of sadomasochism.<sup>218</sup> In turn, she suggests that the "masochist may experience an internal emptiness that propels the vicarious substitution of the sadist's will for self-assertion" (p. 57). In essence, Chancer argues that sadomasochism is not only evidenced within a sexual context, but is a dynamic which is found throughout the contemporary West. An individual may find themselves in a position of power in one instance, powerlessness in another. In this sense Chancer suggests that there is a flip-flop identity of sadist and masochist

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<sup>218</sup> Chancer, L. (1992). Sadomasochism and everyday life: The dynamics of power and powerlessness. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

within each individual, depending upon the particular situation. However, Chancer misses the content of the original text, wherein the emphasis is on the satisfaction of the individual in de Sade's work, and the impossibility of such a paradoxical relation in Sacher-Masoch's work.

Nietzsche's insights are replete with commentary pertinent to this present inquiry particularly in light of considerations of hierarchy. Nietzsche's work is significant, important, and enduring, in part, because he recognizes Shadow as an essential element of the human condition.

### **MOTIF OF MORALITY**

The notion of morals plays keenly not only within the work, but the term sadomasochism still holds a particularly charged value in terms of morality. Morality is a universal construction in all societies, however, the content, that which is considered to be morally valued or devalued, is culturally relative. Though de Sade, and Sacher-Masoch, outline value systems contrary to the polarized, positive value systems of the contemporary Western ideology, they both offer a value system.

Interestingly, de Sade refers to god, and the atheist. The inclusion of elements such as god, particularly in light of the extreme aversion the "friends" have towards god and religion, is interesting, and supports the notion that de Sade presents a world which includes Shadow elements, is primarily Shadow elements

in terms of comparison to contemporary Western culture. One might expect de Sade to ignore the question of god, or to denounce god as a noble lie (in the Platonic sense). The inclusion is interesting. The juxtaposition of the joviality of the "friends" coupled with the reluctance of "The Other" also provides the reader with a completeness of relational possibilities.

It is the potential and possibility of the works, their insight into the human condition, and the effrontery with which they pose alternatives to the agreed-upon social order of the times in which they were written, and even now in contemporary Western Culture which makes them seem dangerous. de Sade and Sacher-Masoch suggest agency, the choice to engage within relations, in relational styles which are different from the ideals of the culture, but which frequently are the Shadow elements of the ideals they transgress. The works may be regarded by some, by many, as horrifying. The nature of horror is contamination. As such, the appellation "sick" may refer to the contamination element of the relational styles. As with addressing that which is contaminated, the question of fight or flight is difficult. To fight is to risk contamination from the contaminated. To not fight allows the contamination to flourish, to spread. Perhaps the horrifying/contaminating nature of these works is such that they have been relegated to the Shadow land where the rosy ideal of relationship may try (in vain) to hide their contents.

## MOTIF OF UNDERSTANDING AND IDENTITY

Understanding and identity occur within the realm of the social. Mead suggests that self develops through stages which display abilities to position oneself vis-a-vis others. Both the works concern themselves with demonstrating how individuals interact, how they make sense of the situations in which they find themselves, how they manipulate the environment to achieve goals. In this regard, both works address understanding and identity. Both works outline styles of relations and relationship, connectedness or lack thereof, which is antithetical to contemporary ideals. For example, should the reader of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch continue to view, as is the case within contemporary Western culture, the position of these authors as villainous? Could we view them as heroic? Just as Visano <sup>219</sup> regards Dracula as a kind of hero, as an individual who resists the dominant discourse, may the reader also view the position of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch as heroic? Pearson <sup>220</sup> illustrates the paradox of suffering by discussing the martyr: passive rescue is not satisfactory for the martyr, instead, salvation is earned through suffering. In the case of Severin one may view his active

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<sup>219</sup> Visano, L. (1997). Dracula as a contemporary ethnography: A critique of mediated moralities and mysterious mythologies. In C. Davison (Ed.), Bram Stoker's Dracula: Sucking through the century, 1897-1997 (pp. 331-350). Toronto: Dundurn.

<sup>220</sup> Pearson, C. (1989). The hero within: Six archetypes we live by. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

participation in discomfort/suffering as martyr like, but perhaps it is less heroic and more cowardly. Sometimes suffering disguises cowardice, though suffering may also be viewed as a gesture to the salvation by the individual for the collective; however, suffering to shield those who are able to protect themselves works ultimately to destroy rather than protect, through the thwarting of potentialities by the actual shielding. Victim or hero reminds one of the model of duality: the sadist and masochist *within* a single individual. This recognition of duality leads one back to the notion of homeostatic balance of ego and Shadow.

Throughout both works established frameworks which assist in directing behaviour (hence identity and understanding) are called into question. Such experimentation gives way to the demonstration of (perhaps) unforeseen possibilities. On the other hand, one may view the ways in which the social actors within the works understand and construct identity as traditional. In capitalist urban centres, relations are based upon exchange, with the ultimate goal of satisfaction of desire as the basis of agreement; the worker sells labour with the aim of acquiring goods which will satisfy, while the employer also commands with the intention of satisfaction through capital gain.

Identity for characters in both works is related to suffering and pleasure. The characters adopt positions in regard to suffering and pleasure, pain and discomfort, desire and satisfaction, extremes and excesses, wanting and not wanting, agency and restriction, denial and access. de Sade and Sacher-

Masoch present works in which the crucifixion of the human at the intersection of irreconcilable, impossible, paradoxical polarities is strategic. It is at this suspended apex that the characters are presented.

### SHADOW CONSIDERATIONS

If, as Robert Johnson argues, the Shadow balances the ego, or recognized elements, either personally or collectively, then these works of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch are valuable in that they represent that which is normally hidden from view, or repressed, either personally or collectively. Recognition of the Shadow may be frightening, but so too is the Shadow unrecognized, for it is the unrecognized agency which is active that is most problematic, for it is invisible, yet present.

As social scientists we are behoved to not only render an understandable world, but to involve ourselves in ways to better and improve that which requires amelioration. So too, we as social scientist are behoved to call attention to that which is satisfactory, that which has been constructed and which more than adequately serves our needs; not only change when needed, but resistance to change when superfluous, is the objective and responsibility of the sociologist. Frequently, various factions of society purport that improvement will occur through change. As Johnson so insightfully points out:

What happens to the left-hand side of the teeter-totter if you don't keep it clean? If you don't live it out?

Well, it's going to maintain it's balance, because you have to continue your life. And mostly, the products of the left-hand side of one's teeter-totter, if not acknowledged properly, if not acknowledged honestly, will project onto somebody or something else. And most modern lives, being bereft of this kind of insight, for the most part, the shadow side, the dark side, goes jumping out, unbeknownst to you, against your will, autonomously, and lands on somebody else. Husbands put it on wives, wives put it on husbands, families choose a scapegoat among the children and scapegoat that child and make him/her bear the shadow for the whole family. Or that unfortunate household down the street will collect up the shadow for the whole neighbourhood, and everybody will be down on them. Or white men will put it on black men, or Hindu will put it on Muslim, or North Ireland will put it on South Ireland, and vice-versa...and that's pretty much where we live now.

Again the focus on improving social problems such as the ones outlined above, and others, claims Johnson, is the recognition of the Shadow, rather than the displacement of it onto another. But recognizing the Shadow does not mean living it out. Again, Johnson points out

But there is one law which saves us, and thank God for that. One can cling to that. And that is that the unconscious can't really tell the difference between between an actual fact, or act, and a symbolic, or ceremonial one. This allows one to live one's idealistic life, and do one's good, and keep one's shirt clean, and be courteous, and do the best that you can with your job. Lead a civilized, decent, cultivated life. And maintain the other side of the teeter-totter, providing that one has agreed and understands that there is the other side, in a symbolic way. And this will suffice. This is sufficient for leading a balanced life, for keeping that wholeness, which is so much a desired product. In fact, we're going to be whole whether we like it or not. The only choice is whether you're going to do it consciously, or neurotically. So



one can live out the dark side of one's teeter-totter in a symbolic or ceremonial way...Much of ceremony is devoted to keeping the left-hand side of your teeter-totter expressed and so-to-speak, keep it clean. This is possible.

"Live the Shadow symbolically, ceremoniously...sacrifice something, burn, break, bury, cut up, kill, something".<sup>21</sup> Most ceremonies, claim Johnson, have a dark element. In terms of the contemporary interest in sadomasochistic practices, one may view *consensual* sadomasochistic play as an arena for the acting out of the Shadow. Sadomasochistic play may be the area wherein the actors intuitively *play out Shadow content*, make conscious the Shadow, since sadomasochism has the energetic quality of exotic, hidden, and personally or socially rejected elements.

The Shadow is like the Medusa. One can not address her directly, but rather, one must look in the mirror, reflect. One must look at the rejected, the vile, the horrible, the horrific, the unknown, and see it, and then say "Oh, how awful. *There I am.*" It is the owning of the Shadow, individually and collectively, which opens the way to a culture which embraces, and allows, the completeness of the human potential.

This discussion cannot bring together all the considerations within the preceding work. The very nature of the inductive mapping characteristic of this work is the rawness, the development of some considerations juxtaposed with others left skeletal. The skeletal elements remain as contextualizers for that

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<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*

which *is* developed and remain also to suggest areas of future consideration related to these and other works.

The words of Miller are appropriate for the final segment of this work:

Concluding words are thus hard to write, especially when, as in this [work], no single question was begged at the beginning which was indeed answered at the end. Moreover, each chapter in this [work] moved, I think, toward the discovery of complexity, variety, and richness of meaning rather than toward constraining material into the confines of an overarching theory <sup>22</sup>  
(p. 203).

In fact, this section of the work is a *discussion*, not a conclusion. Keeping true to the notion of the fragment, and the recognition that the notion of the complete is only a construction, this section is not a conclusion because a conclusion brings closure to consideration. This work deliberately remains open at the end. This work deliberately remains open and has been constructed throughout so as to continually allow possibility and discussion; the vulnerabilities of the work have been allowed to remain, to be seen - the Shadow of the work is left to view... This present author invites the reader to recognize the Shadow, own the Shadow, and embrace the Shadow. Such understanding and acknowledgement of the Shadow is, like the structure of this work, ongoing; Shadow work is never finished.

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<sup>22</sup> Miller, W. (1993). Humiliation: And other essays on honour, social discomfort, and violence. Ithaca: Cornell.

## DIS/SHUT

This work is incomplete. It is incomplete for several reasons: the interpretive process is never concluded, rather, it unfolds. Further, topics of interest within this work are not discrete, but related, and interrelated. The fruit of this mapping of the Shadow is evidenced through the development of the four core motifs evidenced in the fictional works of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch: The Motif of Desire; The Motif of Hierarchy; The Motif of Morality; The Motif of Understanding & Identity. The mapping and linking of sociological and psychological considerations illuminate paths for future embellishment.

The notion of "covering a topic" gives way to a possibility of consideration since that which is included or discarded is arbitrary, to a certain extent, and contingent upon the sensibility of the author. Depth, and range of interrelated considerations, are always in flux as long as lived experience remains fluid and plastic.

The conclusion is that which closes, and that which closes the dialectic is indeed violence. The conclusion severs as violently as the guillotine. The arrestation of the exchange between individuals, among group members, does not provide conclusion, but only serves to define the relationship, the relationship of the questioner to the questioned, the questioner to the "Others" posing questions, as terminated. It is essential that  
the pleasure of expression,  
the thoughtfulness of consideration,

the delight of agreement,  
the agony of refusal,  
the distress of difference;  
the pleasure of difference,  
the distress of expression,  
the thoughtfulness of refusal,  
the agreement of delight,  
and the agony of thoughtfulness... remains..... open.....

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### **FILM & SOUND**

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### **INTERVIEWS**

Informal interview with **Robert Dante** (Toronto, June 12, 1998).

Formal interview with **Marion Woodman** (Toronto, June 21, 1997).

**de SADE**

*Motif Inventory from*  
**120 DAYS OF SODOM**

191

*Motif of the debauched*

*Motif of communication & documentation*

*Motif of friendship*

*Motif of orgy*

192/193

*Motif of marriage*

*Motif of whim / desire*

*Motif of secrets*

*Motif of the slave*

*Motif of submission*

*Motif of the tyrant / despot*

*Motif of joy / pleasure*

194

*Motif of the well hung*

194 a

*Motif of gender-appropriate role flexibility*

195

*Motif of social class*

*Motif of nature*

*Motif of social convention*

240

*Motif of rationalization*

*Motif of order and obedience*

*Motif of desire*

*Motif of the insatiable*

241

*Motif of public and private*

241 a

*Motif of bodily gestures of reverence / veneration*

242

*Motif of penalty*

*Motif of death*

247

*Motif of the debauched*  
*Motif of filth*  
*Motif of brutality*  
247 a  
*Motif of common sense*  
*Motif of moderation*  
248  
*Motif of respect*  
251  
*Motif of desire*  
*Motif of understanding / knowing*  
*Motif of punishment*  
252  
*Motif of religion*  
252/253  
*Motif of preparation*  
*Motif of impurity*  
*Motif of antiquity / modernity*  
*Motif of pleasure*  
*Motif of nature*  
*Motif of crime / transgression*  
*Motif of extravagance / extreme*  
*Motif of satisfaction*  
*Motif of possibility*  
266  
*Motif of communication / expression / understanding*  
*Motif of family ties*  
287  
*Motif of individualism*  
*Motif of the devil / the demonic*  
*Motif of advice*  
*Motif of hypocrisy*  
287 a  
*Motif of non-attachment*  
*Motif of secret / confession*

*Motif of business*  
287 b

*Motif of the voyeur*  
*Motif of taboo*  
301

*Motif of rationalization*  
313

*Motif of exception*  
330

*Motif of age*  
*Motif of beauty*  
*Motif of dishonour*  
*Motif of filth*  
*Motif of pleasure*  
347

*Motif of taste*  
*Motif of authenticity*  
350

*Motif of ceremony / ritual*  
*Motif of punishment*  
*Motif of imagination / minding*  
*Motif of exploitation*  
350 a

*Motif of omission*  
*Motif of correction / punishment*  
358

*Motif of nudity*  
*Motif of beauty*  
*Motif of disgust*  
*Motif of enchantment*  
360

*Motif of ingestion (waste)*  
361

*Motif of ingestion*  
*(food)*

*Motif of satisfaction & happiness*

*Motif of desire*

*Motif of absence*

*Motif of comparison*

*Motif of enjoyment*

*Motif of equality*

362

*Motif of aide*

*Motif of comparison*

*Motif of happiness*

*Motif of differentiation*

*Motif of pleasure*

363

*Motif of wickedness*

*Motif of the erotic*

*Motif of evil as erotic*

*Motif of pleasure*

378

*Motif of courtesy*

*Motif of inversion*

389

*Motif of judgment*

*Motif of reproach*

*Motif of behaviour as predetermined by nature*

412

*Motif of aloneness*

*Motif of visibility*

*Motif of limit*

*Motif of freedom*

*Motif of desire*

*Motif of god*

*Motif of remorse*

*Motif of guilt*

*Motif of pleasure*

423



*Motif of taste*

426

*Motif of social order / hierarchy as natural*

*Motif of balance*

*Motif of nature as disorderly*

430

*Motif of gratitude*

*Motif of fondness*

*Motif of social ties / aloneness*

*Motif of crime*

*Motif of generosity / giving*

*Motif of humiliation / suffering*

*Motif of the soul*

*Motif of benevolence*

*Motif of enemies / connectedness*

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of servitude*

*Motif of social hierarchy*

432

*Motif of the value of the experienced / age*

433

*Motif of evaluation / judgment*

*Motif of nature*

*Motif of perfection / hierarchy*

*Motif of the goddess*

455

*Motif of libertinage as diversion / maintenance of social order*

453

*Motif of omission*

470

*Motif of imagination*

*Motif of minding*

*Motif of exploitation*

470 a

*Motif of group secret*

*Motif of omission*  
*Motif of modesty*  
*Motif of information management*  
*Motif of discretion*  
470 b  
*Motif of teaching*  
473  
*Motif of engaging "The Other"*  
*Motif of violence*  
474  
*Motif of common-sense*  
475/476  
*Motif of aide*  
*Motif of familial ties*  
*Motif of disgust*  
*Motif of happiness*  
*Motif of the absurd*  
*Motif of misfortune*  
477  
*Motif of disorder / health & illness*  
477 a  
*Motif of faith (religion)*  
*Motif of law*  
*Motif of horror*  
*Motif of charity*  
493  
*Motif of insult*  
*Motif of hierarchy*  
*Motif of inversion*  
*Motif of ecstasy*  
496  
*Motif of degradation*  
*Motif of punishment*  
*Motif of paradox*  
*Motif of enigma*

*Motif of "The Other" and relationship*

500

*Motif of intimacy & affection*

*Motif of women as property*

505

*Motif of preparation / minding*

*Motif of death*

508

*Motif of regret*

*Motif of self-interest*

*Motif of breaking trust*

*Motif of violation*

*Motif of honour*

*Motif of mass transgression*

510

*Motif of emotion*

*Motif of forgiveness*

*Motif of transgression*

*Motif of punishment*

*Motif of codification*

514

*Motif of torture*

522

*Motif of fire*

530

*Motif of obedience*

*Motif of pleasure*

531

*Motif of autoerotic asphyxiation*

532

*Motif of horror*

*Motif of sexual arousal*

*Motif of opinion*

*Motif of relativity*

*Motif of prejudice*

533

*Motif of crime as the denial of sexual pleasure*

537

*Motif of the Goddess*

545

*Motif of satiation*

5457

*Motif of reason*

*Motif of restraint*

552

*Motif of human / animal division*

*Motif of obedience*

*Motif of humiliation*

*Motif of degradation*

561

*Motif of evil*

*Motif of seduction*

*Motif of exploitation*

*Motif of lack*

561

*Motif of evil*

*Motif of seduction*

*Motif of exploitation*

*Motif of lack*

568

*Motif of reward / recompense*

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of gentleness*

*Motif of exception*

**von SACHER-MASOCH**

*Motif Inventory from*  
**VENUS IN FURS**

*Motif of absence*  
*Motif of bodily gestures of reverence and veneration*

*Motif of self-location / self-reflection / self as object*  
7

*Motif of relation to "Other"*

*Motif of enchantment*

7 a

*Motif of opposite*

*Motif of the feminine*

*Motif of war / enemy*

*Motif of virility*

*Motif of goddess*

*Motif of authenticity*

*Motif of emotion*

7 b

*Motif of understanding / comprehension*

*Motif of temperature (environmental)*

8

*Motif of cause & effect*

8 a

*Motif of nature*

8 b

*Motif of secrets & confession*

8 c

*Motif of transgression*

*Motif of temperature (as indicator of relational indicator)*

*Motif of presentation*

*Motif of authenticity*

9

*Motif of emotion*

9/10

*Motif of the divine*

*Motif of the godly/ human/ animal division*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of emotion*

10

*Motif of passion*

*Motif of pleasure*

11

*Motif of duty / social responsibility*

*Motif of pleasure*

11 a

*Motif of antiquity & modernity*

*Motif of the natural*

*Motif of the demonic / the devil*

12

*Motif of god*

*Motif of temperature (emotionally)*

12 a

*Motif of emotional union*

*Motif of temporality*

*Motif of sensation*

*Motif of union / aloneness*

*Motif of subjugation*

12 b

*Motif of slave*

17

*Motif of danger*

*Motif of health & illness*

*Motif of sanity*

18

*Motif of science & the rational / empirical*

18

*Motif of documentation / representation*

22

*Motif of power*

*Motif of gender differences*

*Motif of self-understanding*

*Motif of choice*

*Motif of tyrant*  
*Motif of slave*  
*Motif of power*  
25  
*Motif of the demonic*  
25/26  
*Motif of truth*  
*Motif of history / memory /representation*  
*Motif of emotion*  
*Motif of opposites united*  
29  
*Motif of death*  
31  
*Motif of despot / tyrant*  
*Motif of fur*  
*Motif of cruelty -love -beauty*  
32  
*Motif of rapture*  
*Motif of happiness*  
*Motif of torment*  
*Motif of the erotic*  
*Motif of worship*  
*Motif of slave*  
*Motif of pity*  
34  
*Motif of restraint / self-control*  
35  
*Motif of the goddess*  
*Motif of beauty*  
*Motif of the feminine*  
*Motif of temperature*  
36  
*Motif of self-understanding*  
*Motif of self-identity*  
*Motif of human / animal division*



37

*Motif of authenticity*

*Motif of admission*

40

*Motif of antiquity / modernity*

40 a

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of pain*

41

*Motif of battle / war*

*Motif of the spirit*

*Motif of the senses*

*Motif of mind/body dualism*

42

*Motif of inflation*

*Motif of the impossibility of permanence of love*

*Motif of changeability*

42/43

*Motif of rebellion against normative social structure*

*Motif of risk*

*Motif of individualism*

*Motif of hypocrisy*

*Motif of respect*

*Motif of authenticity*

43

*Motif of youth*

*Motif of wealth*

*Motif of beauty*

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of enjoyment*

46

*Motif of beauty*

*Motif of freedom*

*Motif of happiness*

*Motif of slave*  
*Motif of volition (choice)*  
*Motif of desire*  
*Motif of equality*  
*Motif of love (emotion)*  
49  
*Motif of gift*  
*Motif of fur*  
56  
*Motif of agreement*  
*Motif of marriage*  
*Motif of complementarity*  
*Motif of satisfaction*  
55  
*Motif of imagination*  
*Motif of monogamy*  
*Motif of subjugation*  
*Motif of dominance & submission*  
*Motif of gender relations*  
57  
*Motif of emotion (love) and the experience of emotion*  
*Motif of inevitability*  
58  
*Motif of suffering*  
*Motif of sanity / insanity*  
*Motif of loss & possession*  
*Motif of torment*  
58 a  
*Motif of persons as possession/ property*  
59  
*Motif of conditionality*  
*Motif of knowing "The Other"*  
*Motif of good & bad*  
*Motif of abandon*  
*Motif of arrogance*

*Motif of person as property*

*Motif of suffering*

61

*Motif of enjoyment*

*Motif of happiness*

*Motif of emotion*

*Motif of pain*

*Motif of betrayal*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of luxury*

61 a

*Motif of marriage*

*Motif of slave*

*Motif of entertainment*

*Motif of power*

*Motif of imprudence*

*Motif of choice*

62

*Motif of opposites*

*Motif of enemies*

*Motif of extreme*

*Motif of hate*

*Motif of fear*

*Motif of happiness*

*Motif of emotion (love)*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of hierarchy*

*Motif of attraction*

*Motif of reason*

*Motif of enjoyment*

*Motif of suffering*

62/63

*Motif of reason*

65

*Motif of human / animal division*

*Motif of victim*  
*Motif of development*  
65 a  
*Motif of love as base*  
65 b  
*Motif of abstinence*  
68  
*Motif of bondage*  
*Motif of punishment*  
*Motif of spirit*  
*Motif of emotion*  
*Motif of mercy*  
69  
*Motif of imagination*  
*Motif of perfection*  
*Motif of the goddess*  
71  
*Motif of virtue*  
72  
*Motif of corruption*  
74  
*Motif of symbolism*  
*Motif of fur*  
*Motif of power*  
*Motif of beauty*  
75  
*Motif of understanding*  
*Motif of dominance*  
*Motif of minding as elementary*  
76  
*Motif of the sacred*  
*Motif of sex*  
*Motif of beauty & the divine*  
*Motif of nature*  
80

*Motif of corruption*

80 a

*Motif of emotion (love)*

89

*Motif of enjoyment*

*Motif of the demonic*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of pain*

*Motif of punishment*

*Motif of begging*

*Motif of mercy*

*Motif of danger*

92

*Motif of forgetting*

*Motif of the ugly*

*Motif of insanity*

*Motif of reasonableness*

*Motif of happiness*

*Motif of emotion (love)*

95

*Motif of strangeness*

*Motif of shifts from dyadic to triadic relations*

97

*Motif of despising*

*Motif of hypocrisy*

*Motif of respect*

*Motif of virtue*

*Motif of pleasure*

97 a

*Motif of the character qualities of the feminine*

*Motif of internal conflict*

*Motif of good & bad*

*Motif of enemy*

*Motif of shame*

*Motif of despising*

*Motif of shadow*  
*Motif of moral character*  
*Motif of selfishness*  
*Motif of principles*  
*Motif of impulses*  
102/103  
*Motif of faithfulness*  
*Motif of pain*  
*Motif of ecstasy*  
*Motif of deception*  
*Motif of truth*  
102/103  
*Motif of contract / agreement*  
*Motif of honour*  
*Motif of oath*  
*Motif of slave*  
107  
*Motif of contract / agreement*  
114  
*Motif of seduction*  
122  
*Motif of identity construction*  
*Motif of slave*  
134  
*Motif of dreams*  
*Motif of enactment*  
142  
*Motif of the martyr*  
*Motif of suffering as natural*  
*Motif of absolute power*  
*Motif of agreement*  
*Motif of death*  
163  
*Motif of the dream*  
*Motif of violence*

*Motif of emotion (jealousy)*

*Motif of judgment*

*Motif of death*

*Motif of emotion (sadness)*

*Motif of humiliation*

*Motif of torture*

165

*Motif of insanity*

172

*Motif of transformation*

*Motif of betrayal*

184

*Motif of reflection*

*Motif of the permanent*

185

*Motif of horror*

*Motif of death*

193

*Motif of success*

*Motif of documentation*

*Motif of the supernatural*

*Motif of the diabolical*

194

*Motif of virtue*

*Motif of empathy*

*Motif of agreement*

195

*Motif of the lion*

*Motif of virility / manliness*

197

*Motif of age*

*Motif of atheism*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of bravery*

202

*Motif of suicide*

205

*Motif of absence*

211

*Motif of determination / freedom / agency*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of betrayal*

*Motif of slave*

*Motif of devotion*

*Motif of suffering*

*Motif of emotion (love)*

*Motif of insanity*

*Motif of the sacred*

*Motif of emotion*

*Motif of imprudence*

*Motif of the game*

*Motif of the indignant*

*Motif of emotion (hate)*

*Motif of despising*

218

*Motif of freedom / volition*

*Motif of master*

*Motif of slave*

*Motif of adoration*

220

*Motif of danger*

*Motif of potential*

221

*Motif of authenticity*

*Motif of emotion (love)*

*Motif of relationship as transitory / temporal*

222

*Motif of force*

*Motif of ownership / possession*



223

*Motif of emotion (love)*

231

*Motif of emotion (love)*

*Motif of cruelty*

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of value*

231/232

*Motif of enjoyment*

*Motif of antiquity / modernity*

*Motif of slave*

*Motif of pleasure*

*Motif of remorse*

*Motif of power*

*Motif of opposites*

234

*Motif of the temporal*

*Motif of passion*

*Motif of lust*

*Motif of emotion (love)*

*Motif of betrayal*

235

*Motif of understanding*

*Motif of suffering*

*Motif of slave*

*Motif of death*

237

*Motif of social responsibility*

239

*Motif of cure (health & illness)*

*Motif of extreme*

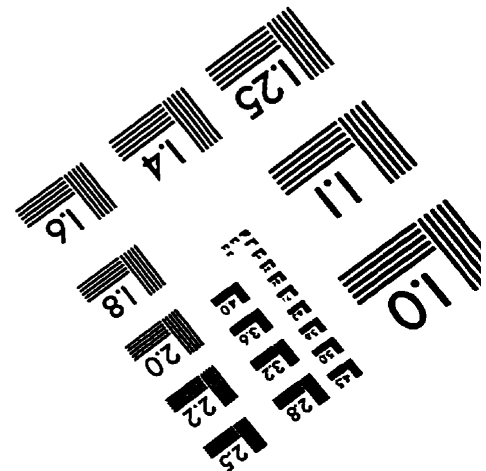
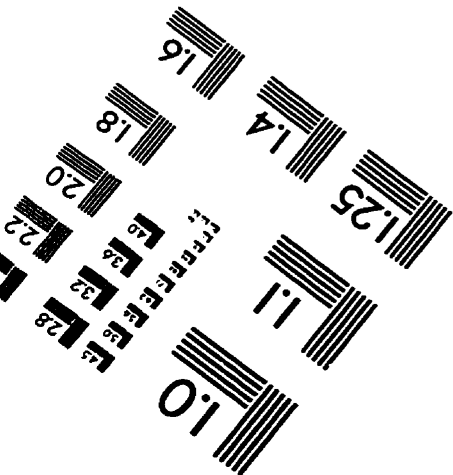
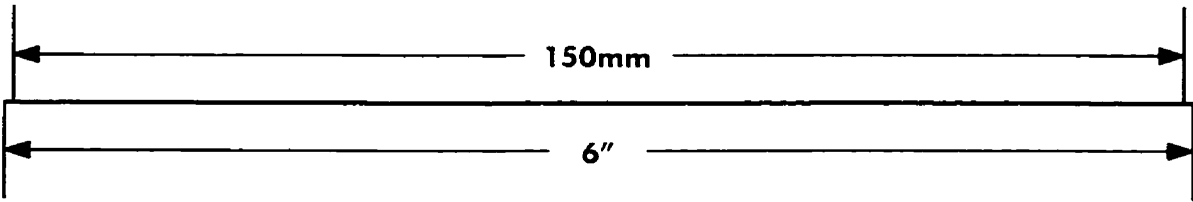
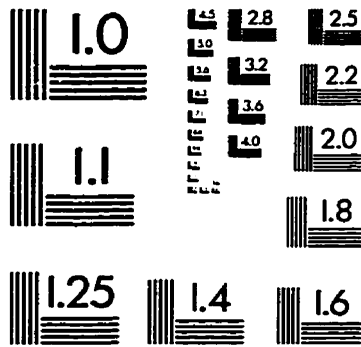
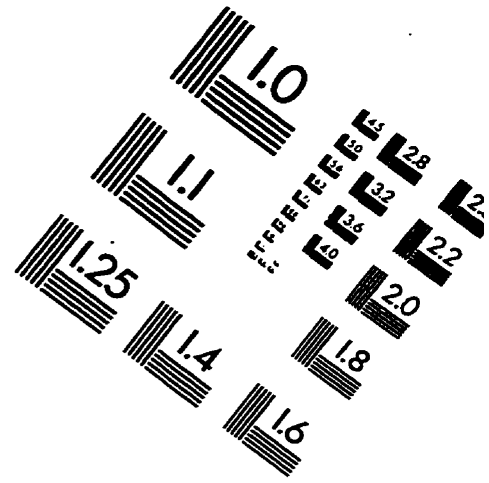
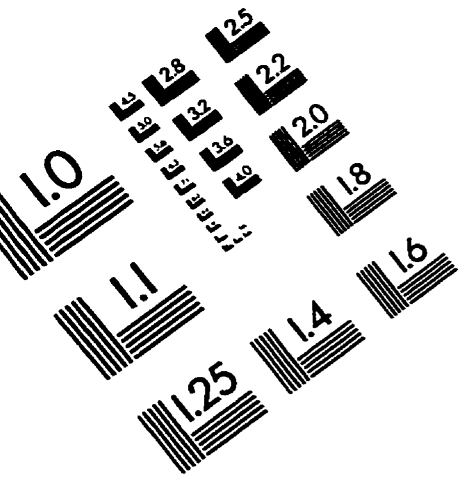
240

*Motif of morals (value)*

*Motif of gender relations as naturally adversarial*

*Motif of gender relations as hierarchical*

# IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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