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“The Summit of Violence” : Cruelty in the Work of Artaud, Blanchot and Bataille

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The title of this conference, “Murder, Massacre and Mayhem,” evokes a sense of violence as chaotic, gratuitous extravagance, immediately calling to mind infamous historical instances of revolutionary upheaval, as well as literary and theoretical visions of extreme destruction: the vast accumulation of victims in Sade’s novels, Bataille’s meditations on ritual sacrifice, and Artaud’s lyrical descriptions of the disasters brought by plague. But my aim here is to identify and explicate a strain of thought which runs counter to such untrammelled revelling in violent abandon, and one which is found in work where the chaos of violence is most vividly represented, for example, in the theories of two of the writers just mentioned, Artaud and Bataille. My argument here is that there is an element within twentieth century French philosophy and aesthetic theory which seeks to escape the disorder, excess and unresolvable conflict which violence signifies by sublimating it into a newly reinvented category, “cruelty.”

Artaud’s connection to the term “cruelty”—and his inaugural use of it, in the 1930s texts that comprise *Le Théâtre et Son Double*, to describe a form of aesthetic experience—is so well known as to be indissociable. There is much less awareness, however, of the ways in which his particular construction of it was recapitulated, without acknowledgement or attribution, by other theorists after the war, and with a recurrence of some of the same themes and implications. This network of uses of “cruelty” reveals a desire to replace the unruliness of violence with a principle of external control and determination; the constructions of cruelty offered by Artaud, Bataille and Maurice Blanchot destroy the importance of the precarious relation between victim and perpetrator in the violent act, along with all reference to the role of individual self-interest and agency. For all three, “cruelty”

denotes a transcendent coercive force, subordinating both victim and perpetrator to its dictates.

The political implications of this set of ideas are all too obvious; recasting conflict in terms of an inevitability divorced from human agency could reflect either a resignation to the impending horror of wartime (as is more likely in Artaud's case) or an attempt to stabilize its recrimination-filled aftermath. Blanchot is the only one who has actually been suspected of collaborationist sympathies, but the concept of cruelty, as constructed by all three, could symbolize a general effort to surpass the political work of differentiation between victims and perpetrators or of dissecting the relation between cruelty and self-interest.¹ In other words, their model of cruelty signals, to paraphrase a last work of Artaud's, a wish to have done with the judgements of politics.

But this conjunctural link to an historical context is only made possible by the presence—in the writings of the theorists considered here—of an explicit rejection of political aspects of cruelty (interest, the power relation between victim and perpetrator, political sovereignty). Their idea of a “pure” cruelty gets created by means of a gradual effacement of such compromising elements; a process of theoretical revision, where links with interest and involvement in conflict are denied in favor of an abstract imperative of destruction. Therefore, the surpassing of political questions of agency and judgment is not simply facilitated by the concept of cruelty; it forms part of its very structure. In these theorists we find not simply the “pure cruelty” they ultimately describe, but a two-tiered movement, where one debased version of the phenomenon—embroiled in the chaos of conflict—is discarded in favor of a more elevated kind, centered on submission to an abstract force, which negates even the interests of the self. Artaud, Blanchot and Bataille all suggest that this final abstraction constitutes the only true definition of the cruel, but the processes of erasure by which they attain to it hints at a more complex possibility, i.e. that their “cruelty” consists in a process of revision, in the abolition of all initial justifying motives and circumstances, for the sake of an autonomous destruction.

The reasons for Artaud's initial choice of the term "cruelty" can be partially gleaned from his rejection of other possible titles for his project. Among these was "The Metaphysical Theater," which he discarded because he felt it would be ridiculed by unsympathetic commentators.² The choice of "cruelty," we could therefore assume, was a defensive strategy: using a non-philosophical but intimidating and portentous everyday category to ward off derisive laughter. It was intended also, judging by the rejected title, to preserve some version of the philosophical implications contained in "metaphysical." There were thus two levels to the term from the beginning, a visceral threat of violence (directed at Artaud's own cultural context) and an affiliation to philosophical abstraction. These two levels are present in Artaud's elaboration of the meanings he gives to "cruelty," wherein an initial emphasis on the chaos of violent upheaval is replaced by the elevation of cruelty to an abstract category.

In the initial stages of elaborating his ideas for the theater, Artaud famously uses the idea of the "plague," as a convulsive force that lays waste to the body and to the social order, to convey the urgency and power of an aesthetic overhaul.³ At this juncture, the central meaning of "cruelty" seems to be a limitless unleashing of destructive forces. Artaud imagines a collapsing landscape of rapidly accelerating decay and wild criminality; citizens who ought to be fleeing for their lives from the contagion remain to participate in it on a moral level, committing gratuitous criminal acts of murder or violation (34-35). Under the effects of the plague: "les cadres de la société se liquéfient. L'ordre tombe" (21). The social wreckage actualized by plague leads Artaud to assert that its analogy with the theater is based on the way in which both release the hidden and unregulated impulses of human beings: "Si le théâtre essentiel est comme la peste, ce n'est pas parce qu'il est contagieux, mais parce que comme la peste il est la révélation, la mise en avant, la poussée vers l'extérieur d'un fond de cruauté latente par lequel se localisent sur un individu ou sur un peuple toutes les possibilités perverses de l'esprit" (44). This clarification of cruelty as the opposite of civilizing order, as an alternative but latent foundation ("un fond de cruauté latente") which when prompted to replace this restrictive order permits the

unleashing of incontrollable forces (“toutes les possibilités perverse...” or the urge to gratuitous criminality described in Artaud’s examples) links “cruelty” with the upheaval of violence.

This association continues when Artaud moves beyond the metaphor of the plague to outline specific theatrical strategies. In “En Finir Avec les Chefs-d’Œuvre,” he conceives of an extravagant aesthetic of violence which will succeed in branding the imaginations of spectators with “un sang d’images...un jet sanglant d’images” in order to catapult them into a physical participation—as opposed to a coldly intellectual consumption—of theatrical performance (127). The indispensability of unrestrained physical violence is asserted in the first manifesto on the “Theater of Cruelty,” where, in an early reversal of the usual critiques of this medium, Artaud objects to the cinema because it is not violent or bloody *enough*; the cinema’s violence cannot really touch our senses, only the theater can have a thorough and resounding impact on our bodies, “nerfs et cœur” (131). Recommending that the theater should concern itself with “crimes atroces” and “la violence qu’il faut,” Artaud again links cruelty with the lifting of social constraints and the inauguration of the boundless destructiveness which had previously been encapsulated by the idea of the plague; the desire to shake up, coerce and brand the spectator necessitates “[un] appel à la cruauté et à la terreur, mais sur un plan vaste, et dont l’ampleur sonde notre vitalité intégrale, nous mette en face de toutes nos possibilités” (133, 134). This statement recalls the wording of the reference to “cruauté latente” in the essay on the plague, and is in accord with the latter’s conception of cruelty as violent unleashing.

But alongside the appeal to violence, Artaud formulates a diverging conception of cruelty that ultimately seems to replace, or at least assert its superiority to the focus on violent conflict. In the same essay where he had rejoiced in the prospect of a “jet sanglant d’images,” he complains of the degraded nature of the popular notion of cruelty, one which identifies it entirely with violence: “Avec cette manie de toute rabaisser qui nous appartient aujourd’hui à tous, “cruauté,” quand j’ai prononcé ce mot, a tout de suite voulu dire “sang” pour tout le monde...” (123). The

exasperatedly insistent repetition of forms of "tout" in this phrase (total degradation, absolute immediacy, complete universality etc.) indicates an urgent desire to transcend this popular preconception, as well as a wish to get beyond the all-enveloping nature of the violence connected with the anarchic destructiveness of plague-time. ("Mania"—in the sense of the transports of criminality—seemed like a good thing in the essay on the plague, but here it characterizes a culture of the lowest common denominator).

In a further set of qualifications of his position, Artaud links the degraded, universally-understood meaning of cruelty with the incessant play of retaliatory violence: "...il ne s'agit pas de cette cruauté que nous pouvons exercer les uns contre les autres, en nous dépeçant mutuellement les corps, en sciant nos anatomies personnelles, ou, tels des empereurs assyriens, en nous adressant par la poste des sacs d'oreilles humains, de nez ou de narines bien découpés..." (123). Aside from the fact that this claim ridicules the infliction of reciprocal violence (by making it extravagantly horrific and by mentioning "us" in the same breath as the exotic revenge tactics of "Assyrian emperors"), its most noteworthy aspect is the emphasis on agency and reciprocity itself: "cette cruauté que nous *pouvons exercer les uns contre les autres*" [my emphasis]; "this" cruelty is a resource at the disposal of "we" who are participating in a violent conflict, quite unlike the kind of cruelty Artaud goes on to specify: "il ne s'agit pas de cette cruauté que nous pouvons exercer les uns contre les autres... mais de celle beaucoup plus terrible et nécessaire que les choses peuvent exercer contre nous. Nous ne sommes pas libres. Et le ciel peut encore nous tomber sur la tête. Et le théâtre est fait pour nous apprendre d'abord cela" (134). The second half of this statement signifies a progressive refinement or purification of the debased popular conception of cruelty; the new version of the phenomenon attains to a more formidable, impressive and inescapable status ("beaucoup plus terrible et nécessaire"). Furthermore it is no longer a mere tool to be used by some of "us" against others of "us," but rather an externally coercive force to which everyone is subject (not "les uns contre les autres" but "les choses... contre nous"). The superior character of this cruelty also

emerges in the suggestion that “we” must be initiated into an awareness of it; its impressiveness is an effect of knowledge (“le théâtre est fait pour nous *apprendre* d’abord cela”).

Artaud refines further on this superior construction of cruelty, through a more complete erasure of the possibility of agency, as well as an active exaltation (rather than a promotion of mere awareness, inculcated by the lessons of the theater) of the condition of subordination to a coercive, external force: “il y a dans la cruauté qu’on exerce une sorte de déterminisme supérieur auquel le bourreau supplicateur est soumis lui-même, et qu’il doit être le cas échéant, détermine à supporter” (158). The use of circuitious (“il y a,” “une sorte de”), impersonal (“la cruauté qu’on exerce) and somewhat vague formulations (“le cas échéant”) removes cruelty even further from the agency involved in violent conflict. Cruelty as obedient submission to a “déterminisme supérieur,” like the previous subordination of an internally-divided “nous” to the assault of “things,” evades the precariously shifting power-relationships at stake in such scenarios of conflict; there is no hierarchy of victim and perpetrator in Artaud’s description; only the “bourreau-supplicateur” appears, himself reduced to the level of an—admirably stoic—victimhood. Yet the intensive “lui-même” indicates that there may be someone else implicated in the structure of cruelty, that the idea of a “déterminisme supérieur” constitutes a refinement of a prior structure, in which cruelty was conceived of as violent struggle between warring entities, and not as an omnipotently despotic abstraction.

Despite the failure of Artaud’s theatrical plans and the drastic influence of wartime devastation on his own conception of “cruelty,”⁴ his remarks in *Le Théâtre et son Double* are avidly taken up and pursued, though without attribution, by postwar theorists of the category. The progress of these arguments manifests such a structural similarity to Artaud’s—without ever mentioning him—they raise the possibility that his (and their) version of cruelty fulfills a wider cultural need or desire, produced by the upheaval of real historical conflict. A version of both Artaud’s definitions and the process of revision that produced them can be found in Maurice Blanchot’s 1949 essay

"La Raison de Sade." Here the initial chaos the theorist addresses is not the violence of plague time or cycles of vengeful conflict, but the glaring contradictions in the philosophy of the Marquis de Sade.⁵ Blanchot confronts, and seeks to reconcile, two central anomalies in Sade's œuvre. The first arises from an enthusiastic promotion of a universal pursuit of self-interest, the idea that "chacun doit faire ce qui lui plaît, chacun n'a d'autre loi que son plaisir" (19). This principle, Blanchot notes, is unworkable in practice: if everyone did precisely what they wanted, each individual would be in perpetual danger of falling prey (against their own wishes, pleasure and interests) to the coercive designs of someone else, and so the utopian fantasy of universal self-interest would slide into tyranny and inequality. The second problem Blanchot discovers in Sade also pertains, though in a much different way, to the relation between interdependence and individuality. By articulating their individual sovereignty in terms of a right to dispose of others as suits their pleasure, the Sadean libertines are in danger of seeming dependent on their victims; of having to acknowledge a fatal flaw in their otherwise impeccable invulnerability (31).

These logical contradictions are solved, Blanchot finally claims, by the version of cruelty Sade's work implies. The problems of universal self-interest are abolished by a re-evaluation of what it means to fall victim to another's designs: the libertines, committed more to crime than to their own survival, do not seek to avoid but rather take pleasure in such entrapments. (Juliette, Blanchot asserts, suffers much the same afflictions as Justine, but instead of defeating her they enhance her power (43-44)). A similar process of re-evaluation averts the potentially compromising relationship of dependency on the victim; just as the libertine's individual life is not esteemed more highly than the dissemination of crime, individual victims have no significance in the overwhelming act of negation (of life, virtue, God, self-interest, pleasure) to which the libertine is committed (and which subordinates even him or her). Having elaborated this synthesis, Blanchot encapsulates his argument about Sade in this way: "la cruauté n'est que la négation de soi, portée si loin qu'elle se transforme en une explosion destructrice" (45).

As is evident from its meaning and context, Blanchot's definition recapitulates a central premise of Artaud's, i.e. that cruelty, rather than being a resource at the disposal of the perpetrator, is an external force to which he/she is subordinated. Blanchot's formulation seems like a neater, more resolute version of Artaud's, as if enabled by the latter's preparative groundwork. While Artaud's propositions are tentative and circuitous, Blanchot creates an exact mirroring of form and content; the statement "cruelty is nothing but a negation of the self" is itself a negative construction. But just as Artaud's phrase "le bourreau-suppliqueur *lui-même*" [my emphasis], implicitly testifies to an alternative model of cruelty (one which would emphasize the victim's subordination and not the perpetrator's) Blanchot's negation also hints at the process of revision which produced it: to say that something is "nothing but" a particular quality is an audacious kind of rhetorical flourish, paradoxically acknowledging, while dramatically crossing out, prior conceptualizations of the phenomenon it describes. This process of revision emerges in Blanchot's argument through the examples he uses to resolve Sade's major contradictions. Like many other commentators on Sade, Blanchot takes individual philosophical pronouncements proffered by the libertines as potentially definitive of Sade's whole position (a strategy which leads inevitably to attempts to reconcile conflicting statements or to reconcile statements with the actual behavior or events portrayed in the novels, overriding the significance of contradiction itself).⁶ Two of the examples (both from *Juliette*) which Blanchot draws upon to substantiate his claim that Sadean cruelty goes beyond both a concern with the self-interested search for pleasure and the relationship to the victim, involve moments of pedagogical admonition where libertines are urged to transcend both these preoccupations and pledge themselves to the triumph of criminality for its own sake. The pedagogue (though Blanchot does not remark directly on the significance of this) is the same person in both instances, Clairwil, Juliette's main female friend and ally.

One of these examples concerns Clairwil's observation that Juliette commits criminal acts only for her own sexual pleasure,

and her terse recommendation that Juliette cultivate an apathetic or cold-blooded commitment to crime, so as to ensure that she will not tire of inflicting cruelty even after her appetite for pleasure has been sated (45). In the other, Clairwil reproves Saint-Fond, Juliette's male patron, for fixating on the degree of suffering he can cause individual victims, an obsession which has lead him to absurd lengths in attempting to prolong their torture after death (32). Clairwil advises that he cure this habit by endlessly multiplying the number of victims, thereby fulfilling his desire for a sense of infinite power, and, like Juliette, expanding the empire of crime as such. Blanchot's attempt to revise Sade's contradictions, an effort which culminates in the definition of cruelty as the "negation of the self," depends on taking Clairwil's position as the final truth of Sade's philosophy, and overlooking its significance as part of a pedagogical structure of revision, wherein one kind of cruelty, produced by self-interest or informed by a relationship between victim and perpetrator, undergoes refinement into an impersonal destructiveness.

An important sequence from *Juliette* (which Blanchot—oddly, given that the majority of his citations from Sade are quotations from Clairwil—does not mention) shows "cruelty" being constructed out of just such a process of revisionary purification: Clairwil's murder at Juliette's hands.⁷ Juliette commits the murder for reasons of self-interest; she has been told by her soon-to-be new female ally and lover La Durand that Clairwil has been plotting to kill her (425). But when Durand confesses that the story was a ploy to win Juliette as a companion, Juliette, in a triumphant revision of her initial motives, joyfully exclaims that she would have performed the killing for its own sake in any case (433). This sequence, like the earlier scenes of instruction, articulates two versions of cruelty—one debased and one pure—along with a striving from the first to the second, in a self-conscious process of refinement and purification. Blanchot's lack of attention to the structure of the examples he gives (and to the fate of their common subject, Clairwil) testifies to an effacement of this process, creating the impression that there is "nothing but" a cruelty purged of all agency and of the power relation between victim and perpetrator. Juliette's own rhetorical

flourish however, suggests that cruelty may be “nothing but” such a deliberate gesture of effacement.

Whereas Blanchot’s refinement on Artaud is only implicit, Blanchot’s own search for a pure cruelty (and the process of revision it demands) finds a direct continuation in Georges Bataille’s *Érotisme*, where the concept is refined to such a degree that it seems to lose all substantial exemplification.⁸ In discussing Sade, Bataille seems at first to endorse Blanchot’s views with enthusiasm; the essay “L’Homme Souverain de Sade” quotes extensively the passage from “La Raison de Sade” in which Blanchot defines cruelty as the negation of the self (191-193). The citation appears in the course of an argument in which Bataille specifies and validates the nature of the “sovereignty” found in Sade’s work: unlike monarchical authority, which always depends, to some degree, on the support or complicity of subjects, and on a concern with its own self-preservation, Sadian sovereignty disregards such enfeebling links to the surrounding world. But alongside (and through) this broad agreement with Blanchot, Bataille introduces a new element into the construction of a pure, abstract cruelty: its circumscription within a self-enclosed realm. Unlike Blanchot, Bataille confronts the impossibility of a total negation of others and of the self; he notes that the real-life Sade did not achieve it: he loved his sister in law, conducting an amorous intrigue with her which cost him his liberty, and, as a writer, yearned to explain himself “à d’autres hommes” (188-189). What allows the articulation and preservation of such an untenable concept is, for Bataille, the realm of “literature,” whose “limitlessness” makes anything conceivable (185). In effect, Bataille circumscribes the idea of the negation of the self within the enclosed—if internally boundless—category of literature, making a space for pure cruelty to inhabit. His unusually extensive use of Blanchot’s words to produce the concept in the first place also constitutes an act of circumscription; the quoted passage substitutes for any independent theorization on Bataille’s part, a maneuver significant for the fact that it marks the second time in *Érotisme* when the theme of cruelty is introduced and elaborated by means of an unusually long citation. In an earlier section on the role of

cruelty in war, Bataille cedes the bulk of his argument to a factual description of violent acts from an account of African warfare by Maurice Davie (87-89).

Bataille's strategy of circumscription (confining the theorization of cruelty to others' words and encircling Blanchot's idea of negation within the realm of literature) indicates the fragile purity of the concept he endorses, a quality that eventually results in the disappearance of all means of exemplifying it. When Blanchot's ideas are reiterated in Bataille's own words, they lose some of their compelling force and reveal the cancelled elements discarded in the process of their formulation (such as the role of self-interest, and the relation between victim and perpetrator). Having cited and approved Blanchot's point about cruelty at great length, Bataille says: "A partir du principe de négation d'autrui qu'introduit Sade, il est étrange d'apercevoir qu'au sommet la négation illimitée d'autrui est négation de soi. Dans son principe, la négation d'autrui était affirmation de soi, mais il apparaît vite que le caractère illimité, poussé...au delà de la jouissance personnelle, accède à la recherche d'une souveraineté dégagée de tout fléchissement"(194). Though Bataille is here agreeing with Blanchot's ultimate claim, aspects of his statement hint at its precariousness and erasure of other logical possibilities. Bataille comments that it is "strange" to perceive that the negation of others ends in the negation of the self, and that this conclusion would previously have been thought false "in principle." Furthermore, an appreciation of the truth of the claim is not instilled through logical argument but intuitive apprehension: "it quickly appears that...."

This apparent retreat from Blanchot's argument does not however signify an undoing of the ideal of pure cruelty—rather, it signals the gradual emergence of doubts as to whether Sade's novels really embody such an ideal. In keeping with the process of revision that characterized the construction of the ideal in Artaud and Blanchot, Bataille takes the route of intensifying the insistence on purity, revising versions of it considered adequate before. In *Érotisme's* next essay, "Sade et l'Homme Normal," which again seems to want to construct the value of Sade's work by rendering it a circumscribed realm (seeing it through the

horrified perspective of the “normal man” rather than the sanguine view of the Sadian acolyte) a digression occurs which exposes Sade as the purveyor of an unworthy, unsovereign model of the cruel. When he makes a brief approach to the actual structure of Sade’s novels (his previous references to them were all quotations cited by Blanchot) Bataille notes that the “cruel infamies” they describe are “incessantly interrupted” by philosophical dissertations from the libertines which seek to justify their mode of life (209-210). As his use of the term ‘interruption’ already implies, Bataille interprets these speeches not as contributions to the progress of the novels (whose proper subject should be “cruel infamies”) but as Sade’s attempt to reach the outside world, to justify himself in the eyes of the society that punished him. Thus, Sade’s language, Bataille strikingly concludes “est celui d’une victime,” specifically a victim of *cruelty*: “il avait alors avec les autres hommes les relations de celui qu’un châtiment cruel accable avec ceux qui décident du châtiment” (211). The ambiguity here (i. e. that Sade *has* a relation to others, though one “devastated” by his punishment) shows Bataille’s sense that Sade is caught in a structure of dependency characterized by an impulse to communicate with and contest the views of those who have judged him, an impulse peculiar to victimhood. Inhabiting victimhood means that Sade cannot embody the all-encompassing negation articulated by Blanchot: indeed, Bataille makes explicit reference to Blanchot’s ideas again, this time to contrast them with the example of Sade (210). The compromising structure of the example (its imbrication with dependencies and interests inimical to the ideal of a pure cruelty) prompts its abandonment; other sections of Bataille’s essay show him preferring the less problematic (because mysterious and historically distant) model of cruelty offered by ancient rituals of sacrifice (201).

Bataille’s reasons for abandoning what might seem like the perfect literary example of ‘pure cruelty,’ demonstrate the values and concerns implied in the invention of this concept from Artaud through Blanchot to Bataille himself. The concept seeks to evade the idea of a power struggle between opposing entities (of the kind present in Sade’s challenge to the society that punished him,

or in that debased cruelty, disdained by Artaud, that "we" exercise one against another). It also gets rid of the agency implied in such a struggle: for the contingencies of conflict, the concept substitutes a transcendent, self-sufficient abstract imperative to which the perpetrator is subordinate along with the victim, a maneuver which might be intended to alleviate the anxieties raised by real historical conflict. But the construction of "cruelty" by these theorists should not be reduced to an elaborate deflection of contemporary political demands. If the concept they outline lays claim to an impossible purity, a reading of their work shows us that this purity is achieved through a process whereby compromising or adulterating elements are cancelled out. The presence of such a two-tiered structure suggests that we consider the specificity of cruelty (as they articulate it) not in terms of a gratuitous coercion (a force that transcends individual will and interest) but as a process erasing initial claims of interest and relations of conflict in favor of the affirmation of destructiveness for its own sake. In other words, the abolition of questions of interest (and conflict) though it may betray a wish to escape from political judgements, represents an active strategy in itself. Artaud, Blanchot and Bataille's remarks enact as much as theorize the phenomenon of cruelty, because they show it always embroiled in—and emerging from—a gesture of theoretical revision.



NOTES

¹ Blanchot's ambiguous politics are discussed in Jeffrey Mehlman's *Legacies of Anti-Semitism in France* (Minneapolis:

University of Minnesota Press, 1983): 6-23. Artaud's place in the recriminatory atmosphere of post-war France is the subject of Stephen Barber's *Weapons of Liberation* (London: Faber and Faber, 1996).

² Stephen Barber *Antonin Artaud: Blows and Bombs* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1993): 52.

³ Antonin Artaud, "Le Théâtre et la Peste" in *Le Théâtre et son Double* (Paris: Gallimard, 1964): 21-47. All further citations from Artaud will be from this collection of essays.

⁴ In the introduction to his *Collected Works*, written in 1946, Artaud produced a much starker definition: "Cruelty: Massacred Bodies." Antonin Artaud, *Oeuvres Complètes*, edited by Paule Thévenin (Paris: Gallimard, 1956) I, 11, quoted in Barber (1993): 132.

⁵ Maurice Blanchot, "La Raison de Sade" in *Lautréamont et Sade* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1963): 17-49.

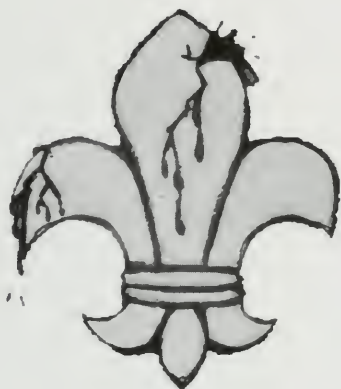
⁶ For example, Simone de Beauvoir's *Faut-il Brûler Sade?* (Paris: Gallimard, 1955): 11-82, where the argument is structured around a series of conflicting quotations from Sade's work. Though less focused on quotation, Gilles Deleuze's *Présentation de Sacher Masoch* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1967), Pierre Klossowski's *Sade Mon Prochain* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1947) and Roland Barthes, *Sade, Fourier, Loyola* are all dedicated to a systematization of Sade's work which relies, directly or indirectly, on specific statements made by the libertines.

⁷ Le Marquis de Sade, *Histoire de Juliette, tome 2* (Paris: Éditions 10/18, 1976, 1977): 425-433.

⁸ Georges Bataille, *Érotisme* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1957).

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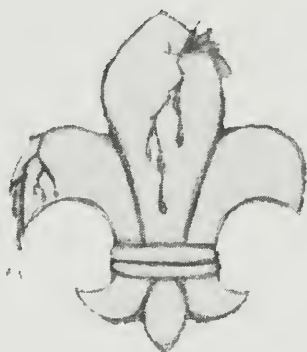
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*Ce serait le moment de philosopher et de
rechercher si, par hasard, se trouvait ici
l'endroit où de telles paroles dégèlent.*

Rabelais,
Le Quart Livre

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