RITES OF PASSAGE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MASCULINITY IN HUBERT FICHTE'S DAS WAISENHAUS, DETLEVS IMITATIONEN "GRÜNSPAN," DIE PALETTE, AND VERSUCH ÜBER DIE PUBERTÄT

DISSERTATION

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To my little brother, Kevin, with love
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INTRODUCTION

A sizable body of feminist literature has grown out of the contemporary West German women's movement that addresses such issues as society's construction of "the female" and how women's self-definitions are at variance with society's. There is, however, an unfortunate dearth of texts in which men engage in a critical examination of the culture that defines the margins of their Being, particularly in regards to the lives of gay men. Hubert Fichte's writings are one attempt by a male author to scrutinize the social systems and cultural constructions under which we live and to demonstrate how these constructions become ritualized. These social rituals become, in turn,

the category of rituals that mark the passages of an individual through the life cycle, from one stage to another over time, from one role or social position to another, integrating the human and cultural experiences with biological destiny: birth, reproduction, and death(Myerhoff 109).
A study of Hubert Fichte's writings is important as it will add an additional voice to the new discipline of gay and lesbian studies. Gay and lesbian studies is primarily an academic discipline consisting of predominantly Anglo-American texts. I hope the contribution of a German author will help to open up this discourse to an analysis of non-English language literature. An analysis of Fichte's works will also contribute to the theorizing as to how a queer sensibility informs a text.

Hubert Fichte's interest in cultural anthropology and ethnographic writings has left an indelible stylistic mark on his own texts. His

1. My use of the word "queer" may seem jarring at first, but reflects the current usage. "Queer" has transformed from a disparaging epithet to a word that celebrates its outsiderness. Its usage in literary theory is an attempt to move beyond the dualizing terms "gay and lesbian." "Today we have, on the one hand, the terms 'lesbian' and 'gay' to designate distinct kinds of life-styles, sexualities, sexual practices, communities, issues, publications, and discourses...In a sense, the term 'Queer Theory' was arrived at in the effort to avoid all of these fine distinctions in our discursive protocols, not to adhere to any one of the given terms, not to assume their ideological liabilities, but instead to both transgress and transcend them - or at the very least problematize them" (De Lauretis v).
protagonists range from characters living in Hamburg during the early years of National Socialism to contemporary African-Brazilian practitioners of Yoruban consecration rites. His works might seem widely disparate at the rudimentary level of plot. The main intertextual link, however, is the exploration of social systems in which the character's transformations are marked by culturally imposed rituals and transgression of boundaries.¹

In his article on Fichtian stylistics, Heinrichs describes Fichte's work as "poetische Anthropologie"(167), which accurately summarizes Fichte's attempt to reveal the cultural systems

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¹I will frequently be using the expression "transgression of boundaries" to imply the delimiting of restrictions imposed upon the practice of homosexuality among consenting adults. As will later be discussed, being queer has more often than not been equated with being an unnatural monster, lurking and preying on small children. This construction functions to maintain the ideology of heterosexual primacy but, as will be shown, is false. These are the arbitrary boundaries that should be transgressed. I in no way am advocating the abolition or relativization of all value systems. To do so would be to implicitly sanction rape, child abuse, and other heinous crimes.
operational in contemporary German society.¹

Heinrich states further:

Der Ernst in Fiches Kunst bestand in dem Versuch, als Dichter eine Anthropologie zu schreiben, das heisst, in der Beschreibung der Menschheitsgeschichte von einem bewusst subjektiven Standpunkt auszu-gehen und in der sprachlichen Erschliessung das Erkannte, das Wissen und die Wahrnehmung neu zu strukturieren, auch zu verkürzen, zu verdrehen und umzulenkten, Gelenkstellen und Umbrüche offenzulegen, Schriffheiten nicht zu glätten, Unpassendes nicht passend zu machen, das poetische Ereignis ebenso wie die Logik der Tatsachen zu wollen; entblössen, verhüllen, einen Text erproben, sich selbst wagen(166).

In a 1981 interview with Rüdiger Wischenbalt, Hubert Fichte spoke about his first novel, Das Waisenhaus.

Es ist letztlich eine Reflexion über das Nichts...dass es überhaupt die Möglichkeit des Nichts einmal gedanklich gibt, und (der Junge) spielt im Laufe dieses Romans den Gedanken des Nicht-Seins.

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¹My understanding of the concept of "poetische Anthropologie" is the union of two disciplines whose tasks are to provide us with a better understanding of the world in which we live. These disciplines offer us interpretations through either a scientific discourse or the deformation of customary language. Jeffrey Peck has also argued for an intermingling of these disciplines under the term "literary studies." "It subsumes not only the interpretation of literary texts, but also the entire institutional and disciplinary nexus of relations and discourse which constitute and situate the perceiving subject and the object of inquiry at particular historical moments" (Peck:312).
durch (Wischenbart 68).

In writing about the potential for non-being because of the lack of an attachment to a specific group, the boy, Detlev, is characterized by his location between two social spaces and the need to move from one into the other. For example, this movement manifests itself at one point in the text where Detlev, a half-Jewish, half-Protestant Northern German boy in a Catholic orphanage in Bavaria considers what he must do to adapt his religious outlook to that of the institution in which he is forced to live. Detlev's constant transition among various, seemingly opposite social groups calls into question the boundaries that mark these groups as distinct and separate. The character has been so written as to represent in one boy a conglomeration of socially demarcated differences that are usually rendered as mutually exclusive. The supposed duality between Jewish and Gentile is collapsed into one entity, a moment of sameness, in which we are forced to question the social construction of a Jew or Protestant.

Detlev embodies likewise other constructed "opposites" such as: Jewish/German, Protestant/Catholic, north/south, German/Bavarian,
son/orphan and homo/heterosexual. This textual merging of supposed binary opposites becomes further complicated in Die Palette and Versuch über die Pubertät when the Detlev/Jäcki character has sexual encounters with primarily men but also women. What emerges is the author's attempt to present the rites of passage that admit the character into one social group or rank and simultaneously show the fragility of that boundary, a limit assumed as fixed by the patriarchal order of things in the narrator's world.

It is in this marginalized transitional space that social mythologies can either be inscribed into the character's subjectivity or rejected. An interesting feature of this transitional space is the absence of a clearly defined status for the subject experiencing the transformation and with that, the absence of a specific role. The subject slips between socially constructed categories and simultaneously delimits a specific category by paradoxically belonging to both and neither at the same time. Puberty is one such transitional space marked by the loss of status as "child" without simultaneously gaining the full rank of "adult." The children in white middle-class Western
societies must successfully negotiate a series of experiences (for example: college, job procurement, marriage) before society confers upon them the full status and privileges that accompany adulthood. These experiences, among many others, defined by society's value system, comprise the rites of passage into young adulthood.

Fichte's texts thematize the rites of passage that occurred in both National Socialist and post-fascist West German society. The works, however, go beyond these specific historical periods and attempt to elucidate a cultural process. Since his texts can be treated as fictionalized anthropological documents, a critical framework that would best begin to open the text up for literary analysis would need to borrow from anthropological theory.

In his classic study of Ndembu (of Zambia) ritual, Victor Turner advances a theoretical framework for the analysis of transitional states or "rites de passage"(93). He terms this "in-between" state as "liminality." "Rites de passage" would then describe the movement from one state into the next.

Rites de passage are found in all societies but tend to reach their maximal
expression in small-scale, relatively stable and cyclical societies, where change is bound up with biological and meteorological rhythms and recurrences rather than with technological innovations. Such rites indicate and constitute transitions between states. By 'state' I mean here 'a relatively fixed or stable condition' and would include in its meaning such social constancies as legal status, profession, office or calling, rank or degree. I hold it to designate also the condition of a person as determined by his culturally recognized degree of maturation as when one speaks of 'the married or single state' or the 'state of infancy' (Turner 93).

I would also add "construction of gender role" to Turner's list of rites of passage. I take the construction of gender-specific behaviors to be a dynamic in which society inculcates its young with limits based on anatomical difference.¹ The young person must accept the

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¹Judith Butler formulates gender in somewhat differing terms. "[Gendered acts] are performative in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications... That the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality... If the inner truth of gender is a fabrication and if a true gender is a fantasy instituted on the surface of bodies, then it seems that genders can be neither true or false, but are only produced as the truth effects of a discourse of primary and stable identity" (Butler 136). One can extrapolate out of both Butler's and Turner's discussions a formulation of gender as a set of instructions communicated to an initiate member of
a group. The ideology informing them in much of Western European and American society is based on a desire to regulate sexuality based on anatomy. A body that approximates the dictates of a certain ideology has merely affixed its identity to a particular belief system. It does not signal the emergence of an inherent ontology.
self-canceling "limits." In other words, any definition that attempts to describe human behavior accurately must incorporate both poles, as well as the range of possibilities along the continuum if it is to remain valid. For instance, we can clearly see the fragility of rigid categories if we conflate male/female with active/passive. The very real presence of active women and passive men negates neither the person nor the behavior. Only the definition is canceled¹.

¹I do not wish to imply that my theoretical framework will advance the proposition that the human being is a totally constructed entity, mediated solely by the society in which s/he lives. To posit that everything is a construct is a pragmatic contradiction, as such a definitive statement expresses an irreducible absolute. I do believe that there are essential traits to the human being that can be read differently depending on the socio-historical framework of the interpreting subject. Diana Fuss offers important insights into the essentialist vs. constructionist debate and posits: "The radicality or conservatism of essentialism depends, to a significant degree, on who is utilizing it, how it is deployed, and where its effects are concentrated. It is important not to forget that essence is a sign, and as such historically contingent and constantly subject to change and to redefinition" (Fuss 20).
The constructed nature of gender and the cultural response to homosexuality is well thematized in all of Hubert Fichte's works, but is especially poignant in an episode of Versuch über die Pubertät.¹ A character relates his experience of having been imprisoned by the

1. The essentialist versus constructionist debate is one well covered in the current literature. All of the theorists whose writings I have used in this work have addressed this issue to some extent. It will become more apparent as this work unfolds that I am proceeding from the standpoint that homosexual desire is an "essence", a part of the human psyche. Its interpretation in the public domain, however, is most definitely a construction based on the exigencies of the socio-historical period that is in question. Eve Sedgwick posits that one should avoid the terms, "essentialist" versus "constructionist" in the discussion of queer desire in favor of "minoritizing" versus "universalizing" understandings of homosexuality. "I prefer the former terminology because it seems to record and respond to the question, 'In whose lives is homo/heterosexual definition an issue of continuing centrality and difficulty?...So for gay and gay-loving people, even though the space of cultural malleability is the only conceivable theatre for our effective politics, every step of this constuctivist nature/culture argument holds danger: it is so difficult to intervene in the seemingly natural trajectory that begins by identifying a place of cultural malleability; continues by inventing an ethical or therapeutic mandate for cultural manipulation; and ends in the overarching, hygienic Western fantasy of a world without any more homosexuals in it"(Sedgwick 40).
Gestapo in a concentration camp for the crime of homosexuality. While in the concentration camp, he marries and is pronounced "cured." After his release he becomes a member of the military and engages in sex acts with his fellow soldiers as they act out power roles. The same queer act that was deemed as inappropriate gender behavior, punishable by internment, becomes a rite of passage. Queer sex is used by the same social apparatus to mark the boundaries in which power operates and to transform the initiate into a submissive social subject. The arbitrariness of gender-appropriate behavior is called into question by the text as well as the social rituals used to inscribe this behavior onto the subject.

The texts that will be used to analyze these social rituals are: Das Waisenhaus, Die Palette, Detlevs Imitationen "Grünspan", and Versuch über die Pubertät. The first three form a trilogy, which depicts the movement in and out of various social liminalities by the characters Detlev and Jäcki (arguably the same person). The last text, Versuch, was completed shortly before Fichte's death in 1986 and is a further exploration, in
diary form, of the rites of passage that played a role in the lives of four men, with the Detlev/Jäckki character being subsumed in one of the narrative voices.

Together this tetralogy comprises a meditation on the social ritualisation that accompanies and creates a variety of "masculinities" in middle-class German society and on the social codes that construct the participant's subjectivity. Puberty is used in these texts as a metaphor for change and transition. Fichte appears to want to open up these liminal social spaces to scrutiny, so that the reader can appreciate the dynamic process one undergoes in coming to a sense of self. Puberty becomes then a metaphor for any change that occurs when the previously held social codes break down and the subject finds him/herself in a state where new codes must be learned in order to organize reality and function within it. He shows that the "ich" is not a fixed, essential property of the human being, but a complex interplay of intersecting social codes. He also presents a "self" that is able to move beyond the social
constructions that mediate our subjectivity and through the self-reflexive act, discover an ontology silenced by the exigencies of a "civilizing" discourse.

There exists at present a small body of Fichtian (Hubert) criticism that has, for the most part, concerned itself with his interest in African religious rituals, which were carried to the Americas by the colonial slaves. There has also been considerable examination of Fichte's writing style. Blöcker, Karasek and Zimmer, among others, see Fichte's style as an attempt at jarring the reader's complacency, so that the reader can experience for him/herself the character's relationship to his environment. Wolfgang von Wangenheim mentions Fichte's interest in depicting transition and change, a theme that Hartmut Böhme takes up in his new book. A search of the Humanities Index from 1984 to 1991 and the entire Dissertation Abstracts until December of 1990 reveals only two dissertations in which Fichte's works appear. A 1989 work by Stoehr of the University of Texas at Austin concerns itself with the
context of the family in the German novel. Fichte's *Die Palette* is utilized to explore the social vacuum created by an absent father. Bertil Madsen of Stockholm has recently (1990) completed a dissertation studying the same four books that I am proposing to examine. Madsen attempts to show the development of the characters ego through the textual complexities of Fichte's style and the structure of the novels.

My examination of these texts deviates significantly from the two previous works by analyzing the social codes at play in the ritualized rites of passage. My emphasis not only demonstrates the fictional representation of these rituals but implicates these rites in the construction of a queer masculinity.

The first chapter establishes the theoretical framework for reading the four primary texts. In order to analyze precisely the "rites of passage" experienced by the characters in these four texts, it will first be necessary to have a working definition of culture and to demonstrate how cultural categories mediate the lives of social subjects. As stated earlier, this will necessitate going beyond the confines of literary theory and
incorporating cultural theories of leading ethnologists. I have used Mary Douglas's *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* to discuss the function of cultural limits in organizing and maintaining society. I have found her work to be most useful with regards to the genesis of systems of taboos and social restrictions. The first chapter also discusses how a culture constructs its gender roles and the implications that the genesis and maintenance of these roles have in the culture depicted in Fichte's works. Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality* is useful in this regard. Michael Kaufman's essay equating the construction of masculinity with violence will be important to my discussion since many of the social rituals that the Detlev/Jäcki character experience are sexually violent.

In order to ascribe meaning to the "rites of passage" or "rites of manhood" it will first be necessary to investigate how gendered roles are created and then maintain the social positions of its members. The theoretical writings I incorporate into my discussion include Teresa De Lauretis, Nancy Chodorow, and Dorothy Kelly.
After establishing the constructed boundaries of the queer culture Hubert Fichte depicts, the ways in which its boundaries are maintained, and what constitutes transgression, I explore the dynamics that takes place in the liminal spaces represented in the texts. It is here, in these spaces, where the characters test the limits of their world and construct a subjectivity that can sometimes approximate the dominant culture or resist it. It is also in these spaces where the character Detlev appropriates a queer sensibility. The first chapter therefore includes a discussion of homosexuality as it is constructed in a patriarchal society and how it self-reflexively defines its own boundaries.

The fictional world that Fichte creates has specific cultural referents and could be said to be pseudo-anthropological field work, as was in large part his intention. Clifford states that

1. Monique Wittig sees homosexual desire as not merely resistive but able to transcend the socially constructed categories of sex. "Because this production of 'nature' operates in accord with the dictates of compulsory heterosexuality, the emergence of homosexual desire, in her view, transcends the categories of sex: 'If desire could liberate itself, it would have nothing to do with the preliminary making by sexes'" (Butler 26)
ethnographic writing is "translation of experience into textual form(25)." I plan on analyzing Fichte's texts with regards to how they depict one's subjective response to the outside world. In addition, they can be read to explore how culture can mediate the boundaries of one's sexuality.

The next four chapters consist of a detailed analysis of the texts, with one book per chapter. I have utilized the theoretical framework that I develop in the first chapter in analyzing each episode in which a "rite of passage" is depicted. Since the rites of passage coincide with the chronological milestones the characters experience, their subjective transformations can be linked to the experience of accepting/rejecting social rituals.

What I have contributed to the fields of German literature and gay and lesbian studies by writing this dissertation is an analysis of the fictional representation of "rites of manhood" and ways in which "queer men" are created both inside and outside of the dominant discourse. Additionally, by giving voice to that which has been silenced by its construction as a social taboo, I
have attempted to take a queer story through the labyrinth of cultural mediation and return a marginalized sexuality back to the center. By reading and interpreting Fichte's works, I am helping to establish a queer order of things that does not order all experience along an axis of acceptable and perverse.
CHAPTER I

The rites of passage that mark the transitions of Hubert Fichte's fictional "Detlev" are more than mere markers of elapsed time. As Detlev navigates through his various positions in society, he constructs a subjective awareness of his world based on the cues he is able to assimilate from his culture. Because of the constructed nature of culture, however, rites of passage can be considered as agents of ideological reproduction.

Before the particulars of rites of passage can be discussed, the social structure within which they function must first be examined. The structure, culture, is the dynamic process that shapes its member's subjective awareness by defining the objective world and providing an interpretive strategy that facilitates the subject's search for meaning. The multiple meanings of the word "culture", however, point to the constructedness and arbitrariness of the "truths"
it purports to make meaningful. Culture can range in meaning from a simple aggregation of living organisms to a synonym for high art. Culture might, in one instance, signify a group of people who inhabit an area with distinct geographic boundaries and in another, people with a common linguistic heritage. Culture might also categorize those with a common ethnicity, sexual orientation, or spiritual practice. One interesting feature of any culture is the specificity of its norms and taboos in the given social organization.

A transgression meriting death in a given culture becomes completely meaningless in another. Even within specific social groupings, a variety of taboos exists that hold true for the male members of the group, for instance, but not for the females. Dietary restrictions are one example of a culturally determined taboo that, to the outsider, may appear as a meaningless imposition on domestic activity. To the member of the culture, however, dietary or dress restrictions may hold profound spiritual significance. The fact that social restrictions are relative to the culture in which they are constructed does not imply that these constructions are superfluous to
the functioning of the society. Societal norms, values, and taboos are almost always agencies of control but without them, regardless of how they are evaluated by those outside the specific group, subjective awareness would not occur as the individual would lack the tools with which to organize reality.

In her discussion of "secular defilement" Mary Douglas aptly summarizes the process by which we order the chaos of objective stimuli.

For it seems that whatever we perceive is organized into patterns for which we, the perceivers, are largely responsible...each of us constructs a stable world in which objects have recognizable shapes, are located in depth, and have permanence. In perceiving we are building, taking some cues and rejecting others. The most acceptable cues are those which fit most easily into the pattern that is being built up. Ambiguous ones tend to be treated as if they harmonized with the rest of the pattern. Discordant ones tend to be rejected. If they are accepted, the structure of assumptions has to be modified. As learning proceeds, objects are named(1966:36).

The act of organizing our perceptions into understandable categories is a universal human process. However, a widely diverse range of interpretations can result from this process. The disparate possibilities for interpreting the objective world pose, perhaps,
the biggest obstacle in attempting to formulate a general theory of cultural semiosis.

The concept of culture has its origins most often traced to the 1871 definition by the anthropologist, Edward B. Tylor:

[Culture is] that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man [sic] as a member of society (Rice 3).

Tylor's formulation of "culture" establishes its referent as a social group and distinguishes its usage from that of culture as a purely aesthetic proposition. His definition, however, treats culture as a monolithic entity. Furthermore, he does not address the fact that the acquisition of "social habits" occurs in power relationships where the one assimilating the exigencies of the culture is generally in a subservient position. Further analysis of culture has scrutinized the process of ideological reproduction and challenged the concept of culture as a purely macro-social event.¹ It has been shown, in both theoretical

1. To clarify further this statement, culture is not an entity that operates independently of its constituent members but functions reciprocally with the individual subject. Although the social subject initially interprets the world based on existing ideological frameworks,
determining human behavior.¹

While organizing reality, as described by Douglas, the human selects those patterns for inclusion into his/her subjectivity that are consistent with what seems to be operational in one's outer world. What one has to select from has already been established and will be reproduced by the new subject. This subject will,

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s/he is eventually able to resist the dominant discourse and reinterpret the world based on a more subjective formulation of his/her world. It is in this way that the social subject reciprocally interacts with the dominant culture.

1. Any discussion of the relationship between culture and ideology must acknowledge its indebtedness to the theoretical writings of Louis Althusser. "Marx showed that every social formation constitutes an 'organic totality', comprised of three essential 'levels': the economy, politics, and ideology - or 'forms of social consciousness'... Ideological representations concern nature and society, the very world in which men live. Yet these representations are not true knowledge of the world they represent... This is the first essential characteristic of ideology: like all social realities, it is intelligible only through its structure. Ideology comprises representations, images, signs, etc., but these elements considered in isolation from each other, do not comprise ideology. It is their systematicity, their mode of arrangement and combination, that gives them their meaning; it is their structure that determines their meaning and function" (Althusser 27). For the purposes of this dissertation, literary works will act as the means of analyzing the structure of various ideological positions.
unless challenged, maintain the shared belief system showing that "culture consists of socially established structures of meaning..." (Geertz 12). The tenets of a culture are inherited and their maintenance is a willful act of social consensus. Human behavior is a symbolic act with the culturally defined belief system as its epistemological brackets. This would, for instance, explain the phenomenon of "culture shock." The disorientation one experiences results from the inability to interpret symbolic acts outside one's usual semiotic system, or in other words, it is from a "lack of familiarity with the imaginative universe within which [another society's] acts are signs" (Geertz 13).

Culture is then not a static entity that can be positivistically described. If one attempts to articulate the practice of culture, one must offer an interpretation of specific symbolic acts in context with the group that uses these acts as ways of ordering its reality. The meaning of any cultural symbol can be modified at the individual level, but the symbol remains, both initially and subsequent to the individual's reinterpretation, firmly in the public domain. Because meaning is
public and culture symbolically enacts an understanding of public meaning, culture can also be understood as an ideology representing a social matrix. Culture is not then a neutral descriptor but the adoption of an ideological position within this matrix.

In this respect then culture, as the assumption of an ideological position, represents a perceptual distortion of objective reality, which ironically cannot be known except by being partially interpreted in terms the subject can understand.¹ Mary Douglas concedes this in her analysis of social structures and states:

> When the community is attacked from outside at least the external danger fosters solidarity within. When it is attacked from within by wanton individuals, they can be punished and the structure publicly reaffirmed. But it is possible for the structure to be self-defeating. Perhaps all social systems are built on contradiction, in some sense at war with themselves(Douglas 140).

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¹Althusser has argued that ideology is a representation but not a reflection of the true knowledge of the world. True knowledge "of the mechanism of economic and political structures can derive only from another practice, in the same way that knowledge of the laws of nature cannot be the product of simple technical practice and perception,...but is the product of scientific practices, distinct from immediate practices"(Althusser 24).
Ideology can be conceptualized as a deformation of understanding "by the [psychological] pressure of personal emotions like hate, desire, anxiety, or fear" (Geertz 197). This is not to imply that culture, as a symbolic manifestation of an ideology, is a consistently negative moment in the lives of human beings. Without the ordering of experience that takes place within a cultural system, the individual would be unable to create his/her subjective awareness and lack the ability to function within one's social sphere.

Cultures direct their adherents' attention toward certain phenomena and away from others. Since it is not possible for people to know more than a small fraction of the consequences their actions pose for them in the present (let alone in the future), they must proceed according to an attention rejecting and directing framework (Widavsky 60).

Culture as an ideological system becomes problematic, however, when it attempts to function as a monolithic "truth." The inability of ideology to fulfill this function has been convincingly argued by Geertz in his critique of social science.

First, where social science, shaped as is all thought by the overall values of the society within which it is contained, is selective in the sort of
questions it asks, the particular problems it chooses to tackle, and so forth, ideologies are subject to a further, cognitively more pernicious 'secondary' selectivity, in that they emphasize some aspects of social reality - and neglect or even suppress other aspects...Ideological thought, not content with mere overselectivity, positively distorts even those aspects of social reality it recognizes, distortion that becomes apparent only when the assertions involved are placed against the background of the authoritative finding of social science (Geertz 198).

His assessment of the distortions seemingly inherent in ideology relate to more than the social sciences. Culture, as an ideological system, bequeathes to the subject an already formed perceptual inheritance with which to order the symbols in his/her reality. If a property of ideological production involves selecting only those patterns that serve to maintain the tenets of a certain ideology, then something equally real has had its relevance diminished. What is negated or diminished in importance must somehow threaten the stable functioning of the cultural system or else it would not be marginalized in the dominant belief system. The social determinants of ideology are then conditioned by the system's response to its perceived threats.

According to Geertz, there are two ways of
understanding the genesis of social ideology. The first one, the "interest" theory, is set against a backdrop of universal struggle for one's advantage over another. Marxist theory is a good example of an ideological stance that operates as a weapon against the injustices of economic exploitation. Marxist theory, however, reveals the main flaw in interest theories of ideology. Its reductive nature holds all human behavior to be contingent on economic determinants and does not account for the possibility of economics as a symbolic manifestation of an intrapsychic struggle.

...vulgar Marxism completely separates economic existence from social existence as a whole, and states that man's 'ideology' and 'consciousness' are solely and directly determined by his economic existence (Reich 14).

It is my intent not to make a case against Marxist theory but maintain that Marxism does not go far enough in explaining how an ideology is determined. The genesis of the intrapsychic struggles may be in the macro-social field. Culture's norms and taboos do become inscribed onto the bodies of its members allowing one to read the body as a metaphor for the larger society, but, as will be shown, these struggles relate to more than dissatisfaction with one's class
standing.

Geertz's "strain" theory adds another dimension for consideration as to why a certain ideology is constructed. "In the strain theory [ideological pronouncements] are seen against the background of a chronic effort to correct sociopsychological disequilibrium" (Geertz 201). Consistent with Douglas's formulation of culture as a system "at war with itself," ¹ he sees strain theory as able to explicate "the chronic malintegration of society" (Geertz 203). The ideology that any given culture generates can be seen as the struggle to keep distant those elements de-legitimized by a taboo system. The tenacity with which a culture holds to its belief systems, belies the paradoxical fragility of its boundaries. A formidable amount of energy is expended in order to reduce the

¹ As I will be using Douglas's formulation of systems as "being at war with themselves", throughout this dissertation, I wish to clarify my interpretation of her proposition. In a social system, there appear to be values and norms that contradict the very ideological positions that the cultural is built on. Douglas offers the example of the necessity of sexual collaboration between men and women for the continuance of any society, but the sometimes violent antagonism that takes place within this social arrangement.
tensions created by the over-selection of cultural "truths." However a culture is never completely successful in overcoming its inherent contradictions. As Geertz understands it, ideology "provides a symbolic outlet for emotional disturbances generated by social disequilibrium" (204). Geertz further proposes four models of explanation as to how ideologies deal with the struggles they generate. The four paradigms are:

the cathartic, the Morale, the Solidarity and the advocacy. By the cathartic explanation is meant the venerable safety-valve or scapegoat theory. Emotional tension is drained off by being displaced onto symbolic enemies...by the morale explanation is meant the ability of an ideology to sustain individuals (or groups) in the face of chronic strain, either by denying it outright or by legitimizing it in terms of higher values...by the solidarity explanation is meant the power of ideology to knit a social group or class together (i.e., the labor movement, business community, etc.)...finally, by the advocacy explanation is meant the action of ideologies in articulating, however partially and indistinctly, the strains that impel them, thus forcing them into the public notice (205).

What is clear by now, is the reciprocal equation between culture and ideology. Culture is a symbolic manifestation of certain beliefs and shared beliefs that knit together distinct social
groups. A culture's belief system manifests itself as a result of the strain created by its own ideologies, which reflexively circle back to validate its framework of norms and taboos.

Ideological constructions become written into the minds of its members who act out society's exigencies through a complex organization of corporeal desires and functions. The next question is why ideological regulation of the body is such a compelling force with regards to cultural self-preservation. The body can be used as our object of study because of how society interprets the functions of the human body and defines the limits of propriety as it concerns the body.

The body is a model which can stand for any bounded system. Its boundaries can represent any boundaries which are threatened or precarious...we cannot possibly interpret rituals...unless we are prepared to see in the body a symbol of society, and to see the powers and dangers credited to social structure reproduced in small on the human body...public rituals may express public concerns when they use inanimate door posts or animal sacrifices: but public rituals enacted on the human body are taken to express personal and private concerns (Douglas 115).

Understanding the transformation of culturally relevant ideological constructions into body rituals necessitates a brief analysis of this
dynamic at the level of ego-psychology. This analysis can then be broadened to understand rites of passage as body rituals at the mass-psychological level. In my estimation, Marcuse's reading of Freud offers the most insightful analysis of how society constricts the expression of desire, creating the subsequent need for tension-alleviating ideologies. Before Marcuse looks at the origin of the repressed individual and repressed civilization, he reiterates Freud's proposition that the transformation of the pleasure principle into the reality principle is the moving force behind the concomitant cultural constraint and preservation of civilization. The pursuit of gratification gives way to the human's ability to delay or sublimate his/her needs "for delayed, restrained, but assured pleasure" (Marcuse 13).

As Freud sees it, this ability heralds our transformation from animal to human being.

The adjustment of pleasure to the reality principle implies the subjugation and diversion of the destructive force of instinctual gratification, of its incompatibility with the established societal norms and relations, and, by that token, implies the transubstantiation of pleasure itself (Marcuse 13).

The pleasure that is modified to conform to the norms of society is sexual. All other pleasures
that the human organism can experience somehow refer back to our infancy, when our entire bodies were still amorphous erogenous zones. Marcuse takes this premise one step further and claims, "the memory of gratification is at the origin of all thinking, and the impulse to recapture past gratification is the hidden driving power behind the process of thought" (31). Freud proposed that the complete gratification we experience as infants is, however, counterproductive to our very survival, since no society can support itself if it is solely dedicated to the gratification of erotic desire. The human organism possesses, according to Freud, a neutral energy that can be channeled into either the life instinct (Eros) or the death instinct (Thanatos). The death instinct is the human attempt to flee tension and pain and return to an entropic state beyond strife. As Freud developed his metapsychology of human instincts, he theorized three structures in the mind where the struggle between Eros and Thanatos is played out; the id, ego and superego.

The fundamental, oldest, and largest layer is the id, the domain of the unconscious, of the primary instincts. The id is free from the forms and principles which constitute the conscious, social individual. It is neither af-
fected by time nor troubled by contradic-
tions; it knows no values...the ego has the task of representing the exter-
nal world for the id...in fulfilling this task, the chief function of the ego is that of co-ordinating, altering, organizing, and controlling the instinc-
tual impulses of the id so as to minimize conflicts with reality: to repress impulses that are incompatible with reality, to reconcile others with the reality by changing their object, transforming their mode of gratifica-
tion, and so on...in the course of the development of the ego another mental entity arises: the superego. The parent-
tal influence remains the core of the superego. Subsequently, a number of societal and cultural influences are taken in by the superego until it coagu-
lates into the powerful representative of established morality and what people call the 'higher' things in human life...the superego thus enforces not only the demands of reality but also those of a past reality(Marcuse 32).

The primary, libidinal energy that, unchecked, would strive for nothing beyond its own gratification is integrated into a socio-histori-
cal reality by the superego. Through this con-
scious mental layer the ideological constructs of an age become written into the bodies of its members. Because, however, ideologies comprise over-selected deformations of inherent societal phenomena, a conflict is established between the memory of unbounded gratification and the prohibi-
tions superimposed by the culturally-defined superego. What results from this tension is not
mere repression of desire, which is the necessary alteration of sexual desire re-channeled into a productive force ensuring survival. The result is surplus-repression (Marcuse 41) which, on the macro-social level, is the consequence of organized domination of the human body by civilization, and on the micro-social level, is the ascendancy of the superego over the ego and id. Since the libidinal forces continually remind the superego of the fragility of its constructs, it must add further controls above and beyond what is necessary for the human to function in society.

The sexual drive is the one instinct that is most forcibly repressed and re-organized into acceptable patterns of expression, although initially, sexuality functions merely to obtain "pleasure from zones of the body" (Marcuse 41). A thoroughly eroticized body, however, stands in opposition to the reality principle of the superego and must be re-zoned to diminish its deconstructive potential. Sexuality becomes constricted "to the primacy of genitality, and in [its] subjugation [falls] under the function of procreation" (Marcuse 40).
At this point in human psycho-sexual development, the super-ego, as the internal voice of civilization, prevails over the drives generated by the id. The sex instinct, at least in Western society, becomes tenuously re-systematized into procreative, phallic genitality. The surplus sexual energy does not disappear, however, but becomes configured as a perverse taboo. The body, supposedly now free of the impetus to seek erotic gratification outside the confines of its narrowly defined genitality, is able to engage in labor and other self-preserving activities. Freud's "perversions" necessitate, though, an extraordinary amount of both psychic and institutional energy to sustain their tabooed status. Perversions are a continual reminder of what has been left out by the machinations of an over-selective ideology and exert a seductive influence; as if at bottom a secret envy of those who enjoy them had to be strangled. The perversions seem to give a promesse de bonheur greater than that of 'normal' sexuality...the perversions thus express rebellion against the subjugation of sexuality under the order of procreation, and against the institutions which guarantee this order(49)...against a society which employs sexuality as means for a useful end, the perversions uphold sexuality as an end in itself; they thus place themselves outside the dominion of the performance principle and challenge its very foundation(Marcuse 50).
"Perversions" are necessary in the overall scheme of cultural symbols as they complete the picture of what has been left out of our expressive possibilities. They represent nodes of resistance to the restrictions that are intrinsic in any cultural configuration.¹

If the Images (the symbols of a culture) were not at the same time an 'opening-out' into the transcendent, one would ultimately become suffocated in any culture, however great and admirable one might believe it to be (Beane 96).

This initial organization of the sex instinct into categories of permissible and perverse fractures the unity we once experienced as eroticized infants in a world with almost unlimited opportunities for gratification. The human mind subsequent to this fracture, possesses the episte-

1. Eric Fromm's formulation of perversion removes it from the realm of sexual prescription. "Sexual desire, even when no love is present, is an expression of life...sexual acts, however, that are characterized by the fact that one person becomes the object of the other's contempt, of his wish to hurt, his desire to control are the only true sexual perversions; not because they do not serve procreation, but because they pervert a life-serving impulse into a life-strangling one" (314).
mological framework necessary to order experience based on a selective system of "acceptable" experience and polluting taboos. Taboos facilitate our "attention-rejecting and directing" ability to be sure, but a derivative, marginalized system of "the other" is created as a by-product of this over-selection. It is within this category that all experience dissonant with the tenets of the superego are located. Only through a strikingly elaborate cultural maze of boundaries are we able to traverse the acceptable social network and steer clear of the Siren's call of the forbidden. To defuse the unavoidable proximity of our libidinal drive, we project onto other symbols the tension generated by our unsuccessful battle with our erotic longings. In the process of de-eroticizing the body, we become a spectrum of bounded systems, which by their very nature must contain margins.

All margins are dangerous. If they are pulled this way or that the shape of fundamental experience is altered. Any structure of ideas is vulnerable at its margins. We should expect the orifices of the body to symbolise its specially vulnerable points. Matter issuing from them is marginal stuff of the most obvious kind. Spittle, blood, milk, urine, faeces or tears by simply issuing forth have traversed the boundary of the body...to which particular bodily mar-
gins its beliefs attribute power depends on what situation the body is mirroring (Douglas 121).

The significance attributed to the margins of the body does not possess inherent biological meaning but is to be read as symbolic manifestations of cultural anxieties. Except for perhaps tears, all other bodily fluids evoke disgust. One could argue that this is so based on our knowledge of modern hygiene, but this does little to explain our continued revulsion even when no health threat is posed. The movement of fluid outside the system where it belongs deconstructs the rigid categories we have placed on the body. As it flows into the margins, it resists compartmentalization becoming a dangerous non-entity. Mary Douglas' discussion of the body rituals concerning menstrual blood provides a striking example of the fear created when margins are transgressed.

The Maoris regard menstrual blood as a sort of human being *mangüé*. If the blood had not flowed, it would have become a person, so it has the impossible status of a dead person that has never lived (Douglas 96).

Menstrual blood is inextricably bound with female reproductive capabilities. Body rituals aimed at neutralizing its dangers speak to the culture's
fear of the power represented by a woman's cycle. Menstruation is an internal power of the female body that lies outside the conscious control of women or men. As the uterus sheds its lining, what is supposed to be "inside" crosses over into an "external" state. But blood and tissue are not compatible with culturally selected categories of "outside the body", so menstrual blood acquires a dangerous "transitional" status. "Danger lies in transitional states, simply because transition is neither one state nor the next, it is undefinable" (Douglas 96).

Body rituals, sometimes elaborate rites of separation or, as in contemporary American society, the colonization of all bodily functions by consumer goods, neutralize the danger of transitional states through an external and controllable power. These body rituals form the rites of passage that bring the body into harmony with the cultural framework of safety and simultaneously inscribe onto the body the boundaries of acceptable and non-acceptable subjective awareness. The transitional states that are created in the first place by ideologies that fracture the libidinal will towards gratification are made into
relatively safe areas of entrance and exit by rites of passage.

In any given culture, rites of passage also serve to mark the end of one social role and the beginning of another. With the adoption of the new role may come a new status in the community, a higher rank or privilege, or it may merely signal a change in function for the person in transition. Rites of passage also serve to inscribe onto the consciousness of persons the norms and taboos that are operational in the society. Rites of passage can then be considered agents that reproduce society's ideological constructions in its members. This process begins with the recognition that a boundary is about to be crossed, for instance, a maturational boundary such as biological puberty. The important feature of this boundary is that it takes on social relevance only when defined as such by a specific culture. Every culture determines what is most potentially threatening to it and develops a rite of passage to neutralize the threat. This is dramatically illustrated by Mary Douglas:

Orthodox Brahmins...allow their sons to marry, [but] preserve the purity of their women by requiring girls to be married before puberty to suitable
husbands. They put strong moral and religious pressures on one another to ensure that every Brahmin girl is properly married before her first menstruation(145).

It is beyond the scope of this work to explore fully the cultural importance of this particular belief system in Indian society. It would not be unreasonable, however, to assume that in this caste society, Douglas's conceptions of "purity" are intricately bound with preservation of the economic integrity of the caste. In order to avert the danger that accompanies the transitional state of "fertile and unmarried", this society has deemed it necessary to circumvent the possibility by requiring marriage before a girl can conceive. The tenets of this culture become, in turn, written onto the body of the girl and are made to seem necessary in the natural order of things. This expresses the primary function of rites of passage, that is as agents of ideological reproduction.

Arnold van Gennep, the first major theorist of rites of passage, ascertained from his studies of "primitive" cultures that "changes of condition do not occur without disturbing the life of society and the individual, and it is the function of
rites of passage to reduce their harmful effects"(13). The changes of condition usually, but do not necessarily coincide with biological maturation and the accompanying rites that mark these changes are participated in willingly. For instance, the rites that turn boys into "men" are welcomed by the boys, as they see in their fathers, or other adult males, the power they lack because of their subordinate status. In order to overcome their inferior social standing, they submit themselves to the mandates of culture regardless of what that entails.

The focalizing elements of the rite, if we take this term in the strong sense, are those acts around which the different sequences revolve and are organized. They are distinguished from the many other symbolic acts which surround them by the fact that, from the point of view of the participants or the believers, something really happens at this moment, a mysterious or mystical operation which cannot be reduced to the symbolism of the act performed (Smith 104).

Circumcision or subincision of a boy's penis does not, in those cultures that adhere to such practices, signify genital mutilation but entrance into manhood, complete with the attendant rights and privileges. Because the cultural reality is such that "manhood" does not occur without surgical recognition of the change, a boy willingly
submits to the procedure and gains assurance against being ostracized by the group. Marking the genitals or any other symbolic act does not, however, occur in isolation. Any socially recognized decree of status, whether it is a surgically altered penis or a college degree, is always preceded by a period in which the participant's psyche is re-shaped to fit the cultural establishment conferring the status.

Bracketed within this experience are the rites of passage. Van Gennep postulated three major phases: separation, transition, and incorporation.

I propose to call the rites of separation from a previous world, preliminal rites, those executed during the transitional stage liminal (or threshold) rites, and the ceremonies of incorporation into the new world post-liminal rites (van Gennep 21).

He further distinguishes two environments that compose the participant's social experience: the usual and the sacred. The sacred environment is that social space where the "truths" that form the matrix of the culture's self-definition are passed on to its new members.¹ There is then a

1. I do not take his use of the word "sacred" to denote a purely religious experience.
double set of rites that attend any rite of passage:

Rites of separation from the usual environment; rites of incorporation into the sacred environment; a transitional period; rites of separation from the local sacred environment; and rites of incorporation into the usual environment (van Gennep 82).

Like the "dangerous" menstrual blood of the Maoris, the subject in transition poses a danger to the established order since s/he can no longer be categorized.

The subject of passage ritual is, in the liminal period, structurally, if not physically, 'invisible.' As members of society, most of us see only what we expect to see, and what we expect to see is what we are conditioned to see when we have learned the definitions and classifications of our culture. A society's secular definitions do not allow for the existence of a not-boy-not-man, which is what a novice in a male [Ndembu of Zambia] puberty rite is (Turner 95).

The physical separation of the liminal subjects from the larger social group has two functions: to protect the rest of the group from the threat these "dangerous" individuals pose; the second, to create a social space where the transition can take place, integrating society's constructs with the subject.

The integrating feature of rites of passage
is its primary function, according to Myerhoff. She maintains that rites of passage not only serve to mark the subject's movement through the life cycle but also operate to unify biological experience with its cultural relevance (100). Although Myerhoff limits her definition to experiences of biologic "destiny", i.e. birth, reproduction, and death, I feel a broader, more inclusive definition is warranted. I take the integrating function of rites of passage to be operational across every aspect of the body and further, to be the ultimate manifestation of the struggle of the super-ego, as the psychic representative of a culture's axioms, to prevent the libidinal energy from breaking out of its narrowly proscribed confines. For the integration of cultural tenets to occur, the subjectivity of the initiate must be malleable enough to accept the imprint of the culture. Hence, rites of passage usually coincide with moments of great anxiety...they are dramatic occasions, naturally or socially provided crises, when the person is most teachable. Tension is heightened by rites, and resolution is eagerly sought. The society is then most urgently pressing itself upon the subject of the ceremony, making him or her into its own creature (Myerhoff 113).

As the liminal subject passes out of, but not yet
into the next complete status, s/he becomes a categorical non-entity. This dubious status discourages any possible resistance by the initiate.

Between instructors and neophytes there is often complete authority and complete submission...The authority of the elders is absolute, because it represents the absolute, the axiomatic values of society in which are expressed the 'common good' and the common interests (Turner 100).

Ideologies operate to maintain a potent surplus-repression. Before the neophyte submits to the ceremonies marking his/her transition, s/he must acquiesce to the authoritarian boundaries of the culture. In doing so, one's psyche or subjectivity conforms in ever increasing fashion to the selected cultural patterns.

As discussed previously, the one major drive of the human organism that becomes most deformed in trying to approximate the ideals of patriarchal authority is the libidinal drive. As Freud has shown, the erotic drive initially seeks gratification without regard to the socially contrived dualism of male/female love object. Free libidinal expression is incompatible, however, with the politics of production and consumption and this drive, which eroticizes the entire body in its
original form, becomes spatially reduced to genitality and functionalized for procreation. This conception of sexuality has, over time, preserved its validity by implying its "naturalness." The reduction and functionalizing of the libido produces an ideology that orders sexual expression into categories of male and female role-appropriate behavior. A system of gender arises because of the refusal of the libidinally-obligated id to acquiesce to the demands of the superego, so a surplus-repressive system of ordering sexual behavior becomes necessary. Gender describes, not only the results of dualistically categorizing human sexuality but, the over-arching ideological position.

As an ideological manifestation, gender has its own rites of passage that secure the boundaries of the belief system. There exist the obvious ceremonies in Western society, such as the church wedding, that serve to mark a couple's entrance into a socially sanctioned family arrangement. There are also those traditions that, beginning in early childhood and continuing throughout life, reinforce role-appropriate actions. Girls playing with dolls and boys playing
with war video games could be seen as part of the apparatus that reproduces the categories of gender in the human body. The girl-mother or boy-warrior are, through these experiences, integrating the demands of the culture with the subjective understanding of their world. Although no biological milestone is traversed by these rites of passages, I hold these childhood games to constitute rites of passages, as the dolls and videos make up the liminal "sacra" or the "exhibitions, actions and instructions" that communicate the culture's ideological constructs (Turner 102).

There is, I believe, a far more subtle realm where the human crosses over from a state of undifferentiated erotic pleasure to a gendered subject. Even though this begins early in life, I hold the fragmenting of our "polymorphous -perverse" (Marcuse:49) sexuality into the institutions of male and female to occur through the mechanism of rites of passage. The period of initiation is significantly longer in our highly technological Western societies than in non-industrial ones as children assume adult status in our society later than in tribal ones. Consistent with a patriarchal order of things, the libidinal
drive becomes ordered along the axis of heterosexuality.

Out of this order of things emerge descriptors of ideal categories of behavior, such as "femininity" and "masculinity." Being "masculine" however, is not the acting-out of some innate quality of the biologic male, but the behavioral manifestation of a culturally mediated ideology recorded on the male body by rites of passage. Rites of passage are the agency that initiate the subject into gender-specific roles. Rites of passage function, to borrow from de Lauretis, as a "technology of gender" in that they effect in the subject the redefinition of libidinal drives according to a socially established configuration of "ideal" masculinity and femininity.

As a highly selective ideological construct, gender must be considered as a bounded set of role-appropriate behaviors, but "not a property of bodies or something originally existent in human beings" (de Lauretis 3). As such, the word "gender" does not describe an innate biological essence but rather "the representation of a relation, that of belonging to a class, a group, a category" (de Lauretis 4). Gender is not sex; one's
genital endowment merely determines what potential role one can play in procreation. Gender, as a conceptual framework informing the social relations of the subject, is predicated on a rigid opposition of the two biologic sexes and...although the meanings vary with each culture, a sex-gender system is always intimately interconnected with political and economic factors in each society(de Lauretis 5).

The sex-gender system is the net result of the superego's modification of the pleasure principle into the reality principle as the drive toward erotic gratification is re-tooled into a force for production and ideological preservation.

The sex-gender system, as an ideological construct, is by necessity a rigidly narrow categorization of behavioral possibilities that renders perverse what is either transitional or marginal. To avoid these dangers, the roles of men and women become ordered along the axes of male/female role-appropriate behavior. Through formal and informal social rituals, we learn how to be women and men.

The sex-gender system, in short, is both a sociocultural construct and a semiotic apparatus, a system of representation which assigns meaning (identity, value, prestige, location in kinship, status in the social hierarchy, etc.) to individuals within the society(de Lauretis 5).
We learn how to represent ourselves as gendered subjects from the socially integrating rites and rituals that first take place within the confines of the family. In the first years of our lives we proceed from a "polymorphously perverse" liminality to a subject whose body has been organized into culturally determined signs.

Chodorow gives considerable attention to the process of gender differentiation in her analysis of mothering.¹ What she regards as a psychodynamic process can also be considered as a rite of passage. The polarization of the erotic into categories of male/female genitality is the consequence of being parented, our first experience with initiation rites. Chodorow maintains that this experience of differentiating already begins in the pre-oedipal phase of psychosexual development and is significantly shorter for a boy than for a

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¹Although I find her book an outstanding study of the process of engendering, I adamantly dismiss her conclusions as a heterosexist leap of logic. For example: "Fathers must be primarily masculine role models for boys, and heterosexual objects for girls, because traditional gender roles and heterosexual orientation are necessary and desirable"(Chodorow 218).
girl(96). This implies that a boy's first rite of separation occurs earlier, which gives him a longer period in which to develop a separate sense of self. This phase of a boy's life also contrasts with that of a girl's in that he is made aware of his "otherness" in relation to his mother.

The content of a girl's attachment to her mother differs from a boy's precisely in that it is not at this time oedipal (sexualized, focused on possession, which means focused on someone clearly different and opposite). The preoedipal attachment of daughter to mother continues to be concerned with early mother-infant relational issues. It sustains the mother-infant exclusivity and the intensity, ambivalence, and boundary confusion of the child still preoccupied with issues of dependence and individuation. By contrast, the boy's 'active attachment' to his mother expresses his sense of difference from and masculine oppositeness to her, in addition to being embedded in the oedipal triangle. It helps him to differentiate himself from his mother, and his mother from his father (Chodorow 97).

The boy, however, does not sense his "masculine oppositeness" to his mother through his own volition. A technology of gender must intercede to make the boy recognize the necessity to change. The genderless, liminal boy approaches the sacred environment of the oedipal struggle, where he learns the "truths" of masculinity. His victory
in this struggle signals his separation from his mother and incorporation into heterosexual manhood. He exits this rite with a burgeoning ego boundary around which the categories of masculinity and femininity are constructed. His initial sense of masculinity results from the attempt to throw off any residual "feminine" characteristic that would indicate a self that remains merged with the mother. As stated before, the boy does not instinctually attempt to overcome his mother and turn all that she represents into the female "other." His actions are informed by a technology of gender, which in this case is, ironically, his own mother.

...Mothers experience their sons as a male opposite. Boys are more likely to have been pushed out of the preoedipal relationship, and to have had to curtail their primary love and sense of empathic tie with their mother. A boy has engaged, and been required to engage, in a more emphatic individuation and a more defensive firming of experienced ego boundaries (Chodorow 167).

The mother may be the initial agent in this rite of incorporation into patriarchal ideology but by no means operates as the sole agent. The entire technological apparatus that effects the engenderment of the boy can be conceived of as two-pronged device consisting of a primary care-
taker, who has internalized the precepts of patriarchally-defined womanhood, and an absent father, whose body has been fully colonized in the service of production.

A boy must attempt to develop a masculine gender identification and learn the masculine role in the absence of a continuous and on-going personal relationship to his father (and in the absence of a continuously available masculine role model). This positional identification occurs both psychologically and sociologically. Psychologically, as is clear from descriptions of the masculine Oedipus complex, boys appropriate those specific components of the masculinity of their father that they fear will be otherwise used against them, but do not as much identify diffusely with him as a person. Sociologically, boys in father-absent and normally father-remote families develop a sense of what it is to be masculine through identification with cultural images of masculinity and men chosen as masculine models (Chodorow 176).

The engendering and subsequent differentiation of the child into a boy or girl is not as dramatic an event in Western society as it is, perhaps, in a South Pacific tribal society. A European or American boy's body is not usually physically marked or adorned to proclaim his entrance into manhood. His body, nonetheless, changes by being internally marked as his ascending super-ego endeavors to seal up the boy's
libidinal sexuality in the margins of his psyche. The boy's passage from an infant, dependent on the mother, to a young boy, with a sense of self that includes a rudimentary disparagement of all things "female," is accomplished with the same degree of efficacy as a society whose sign system is more vivid. The technology of gender that operates in our Western society starts at birth. Since the infant is unable to take up a position and represent himself\(^1\) as a gendered subject, his parents ensure the semiotic apparati are in place to counteract the infant's liminality. From this point on, the process of rites of passage will occur with periodic regularity in the boy's life.

His first experience with separation will occur in the process of individuation and detaching his ego from that of his mother. He becomes incorporated into the discourse of masculinity by beginning to learn the codes that delineate his world from his sister's. The boy will move, once

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1. I do not wish to imply the gendered subject is always male. As I am exclusively concentrating on issues of masculinity and the construction of manhood, the subject of this dissertation and the referent for pronouns will refer to the male, unless otherwise noted.
again, into a liminal social space as he approaches biologic puberty and must separate from boyhood and learn the "truths" attached to his new sexual ability. His still-powerful libido will become further fractioned into smaller and smaller clusters of acceptable expression, turning his body into a war-zone of constant struggling. In order to approximate the dictates of his culture/super-ego, the boy-child must, by necessity, become a boy-warrior.

A culture that is at war or constantly preparing for a possible war conspires to create the perception, especially among its male citizens, that the threat from the enemy is always present, and therefore we can never let down our guard. So men, the designated warriors, gradually form 'character armor,' a pattern of muscular tension and rigidity that freezes them into the posture that is appropriate only for fighting (Keen 41).

He must learn to fight his own urges and funnel his erotic drives into a narrow procreative heterosexuality.

The discord generated as a result of his representing himself as male creates, in addition to the dualistic categories into which anything sexual is pigeonholed, a framework of violence. The boy's body becomes a testimony to the fact that becoming "masculine" and then remaining
"masculine" requires a certain amount of physical and mental violence directed at both the self and the environment. As the boy continually internalizes the symbols that constitute his culture's rendering of "masculine", his pleasure principle becomes subsumed by his internalized version of culture's reality principle.

The rites of passage he undergoes on the way to learning to behave as a gendered male subject in the public domain solidifies the equation between masculinity and the (over)use of power. It seems to follow that in Western society, which is partly constructed around a culture of war and violence, its appointed warriors would begin experiencing power relationships shortly after birth. The boy is pushed out of the security of the mother-infant relationship by the mother's sense of his "oppositeness" and terrorized by the father's absent, but supposed omnipotence. "Violence in, violence out. Men are violent because of the systematic violence done to their bodies and spirits. Being hurt they become hurters" (Keen 47).

Rites of passage, such as those that continually test the boy's physical agility and strength,
sexual prowess, ability to withstand pain stoically and willingness to offer up his body for the use of power, impart the clear message that the boy's body is not to be experienced except as a weapon or agent of power. Keen proposes that a violent culture effectively inscribes its ideology of violence onto the bodies of boys/men with the unavoidable consequence of the male's devaluation of not only his life, but everything around him.

The point is: no one even suggested that men's lives have a claim to the sanctity and protection afforded, in theory, to women and children but men are legitimate candidates for systematic slaughter - cannon fodder. Every man is 'the Manchurian candidate', a hypnotized agent of the state waiting to be called into active service by the bugle call of 'Duty', 'Honor', 'Patriotism' (Keen 47).

We have already established that culture is the manifestation of an over-selective ideology, whose purpose is not only to organize the perceptions of the social subject but to ensure that those perceptions are organized around the forces of production.

The rites of manhood in any society are those that are appropriate and congruent with the dominant myth. The horizon within which we live, the source of our value system, and the way we define 'reality' are economic (Keen 53).
To assure our availability for production and consumption, our libidinal drive is reduced to singular "acceptable" expression, with every other erotic possibility deemed perverse. Because this most primal of urges is split into an artificial dualism, all thought proceeding from this point continues to operate in this framework and organizes further perceptions into categories of opposites. We have seen that rites of passage operate as agents of ideological reproduction by integrating cultural constructs with the body of the social subject and that the body becomes traversed with boundaries delineating the safe zones from the dangerous margins. What is located in the margins, however, does not remain inert, but rather unceasingly reminds the body of alternatives that constantly threaten to deconstruct the fragile brackets of our cultural "truths." This in turn requires an even greater exercise of the super-ego's repressive mechanism to hold the dark perversions of the id at bay.

The ongoing antagonism between the primal desires of the body and the prodigious restrictions of culture exacts a heavy toll on the bodies
of both men and women. The male body and spirit is subject to a series of violent social rituals that ensure that the boy will synthesize a masculine subjectivity and come to understand himself as a warrior who must be in constant battle with himself, other men, and his "opposites", women. We have also already seen how the patriarchal family functions as a technology of gender. From this point we can now proceed to decode the signs that constitute representation of the masculine.

Masculinity is not the result of XY chromosomal imprinting or the result of being born with a penis, but the effect of occupying a masculine position of power. This power is not, however, the exercise of an innate biological property of the male body but the practice of an ideology that is woven through every facet of our lives.

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1. I am obviously borrowing this term from De Lauretis but extending its definition. De Lauretis uses "technologies of gender" to refer to literature, film and other highly organized symbolic systems that serve to reproduce the binaries arising out of notions of gender. I wish to posit that the contemporary nuclear family functions as a technological apparatus in that it, more often than not, lacks any self-reflexive capability and, like a machine, functions algorithmically according to cultural dictates of its society.
Relations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relationships (economic processes, knowledge relationships, sexual relations), but are immanent in the latter; they are the immediate effects of the divisions, inequalities, and disequilibriums which occur in the latter, and conversely they are the internal conditions of these differentiations (Foucault 94).

Analogous to Geertz's "strain" theory of ideological production, Foucault's concept posits power as the result of an unstable sociopsychological relation. Within the ideological parameters of masculinity, we find, more often than not, the most violent expression of power in the social field of Western patriarchy. Masculinity can be seen, in Mary Douglas's terms, as a "system at war with itself." In the rites of passage that serve to differentiate an infant from a boy, the boy concurrently learns to fear passivity and subsequently to fight its return. As he begins to form an ego boundary separate from his mother's,

he embraces the project of controlling himself and controlling the world. He comes to personify activity. Masculinity is a reaction against passivity and powerlessness and with it comes a repression of all the desires and traits
that a given society defines as negatively passive or as resonant of passive experiences (Kaufman 11).

The boy, responding to the ordering of experience by his psyche into dualistic categories, ventures completely to repress his "passive" self, albeit without success. The desiring libido remains a strong psychic drive that cannot be thoroughly extinguished. The boy's desires surface anyway and this "surplus aggressiveness" transmutes his desire from erotic to violent. As Freud has shown, the one desire to be most aggressively repressed is our sexuality. The boy's initial non-differentiation of love-object is rapidly transformed by the realization that having the father (or another male) as a love-object would imply a return to passivity and a threatened negation of his actively constructed ego boundaries. The renunciation of the father as the signifier of forced passive sexual desire, informs hereafter every male-male discourse. The residual attraction men feel for each other must be coupled with an act of violence in order for both the inevitable homo-eroticism to be neutralized and to prevent the transgression of the binary opposites, male/female and homo-/heterosexuality. The
sports arena is the primary social space where a simultaneous admiration of the male body and the violence necessary to defuse the erotic overtones takes place.

Men's violence against other men is one of the chief means through which patriarchal society simultaneously expresses and discharges the attraction of men to other men (Kaufman 21).

As previously mentioned, our subjective awareness is constructed so as to approximate the prevailing culture's ordering of the outer world. Our intra-psychic structures are a mirror of the larger social field and as such, the equation of masculinity with violent social behavior can be read as the inscription of a brutal culture into the bodies of its designated warriors.

The wounds that men endure, and the psychic scar tissue that results from living with the expectation of being a battlefield sacrifice, is every bit as horrible as the suffering women bear from the fear and reality of rape...when human beings organize their political lives around a war system, men bear as much pain as women. Our bodies are violated, we are regularly slaughtered and mutilated, and if we survive battle we bear the burden of blood-guilt. When we accept the war system, men and women alike tacitly agree to sanction the violation of the flesh – the rape of women by men who have been conditioned to be 'warriors,' and the gang rape of men by the brutality of war (Keen 47).

If we accept the fact that men possess a
warrior psyche because they, throughout history, have been so conditioned, it would stand to reason that the rites of passage preparing one for entrance into "manhood" have to contain at least a moment of violence if they are effectively to inscribe the patriarchal discourse of warrior-masculinity onto the male body.

Theodore Roosevelt warned of the pernicious effects of peace: "The greatest danger that a long period of profound peace offers to a nation is that of (creating) effeminate tendencies in young men (Greenberg 393)."

I am not implying that men are violent by nature or that "being" male means being brutal, but I maintain that men who have most vigorously adopted the discourse of heterosexual primacy will have a greater propensity for violence.

For a society in which the culture of war dominates discursive attempts at ordering subjectivity, the male body becomes the agent of destruction, the great signifier of an ideological system battling its inherent contradictions. One result of becoming a gendered subject is the organization of perceptions into binary oppositions, which are, in Derrida's words, "violent hierarchies" (Dollimore 236). Rites of passage serve initially to create the dualities by requir
ing the boy to consider as "other" what he thought was "self." As additional perceptions become ordered according to this dualistic framework, rites of passage serve to communicate to the subject the meanings the binary oppositions embrace in the social domain.

The two main normative binary categories operational in a patriarchal society that bear on the discussion in this dissertation are masculine/feminine and hetero/homosexual. These are a consequence of the boy-child's attempt to overcome his passivity. In doing so he necessarily conflates the categories by ordering them along the axes of active/passive and arrives at the new binary opposition of masculine/homosexual, which is, with regards to the fear of passivity, no different from masculine/feminine.

It is often observed that misogyny and homophobia go together. One reason is that this conflation of binaries enables a merging of misogyny and homophobia, each of which then potentially expresses the violence of the other (Dollimore 236).

This conflation was most pointedly expressed by the Swiss psychiatrist, August Forel, who in 1933 stated that male homosexuals,

feel the need for passive submission,
they become easily enraptured over
novels [sic] and dress, they like to occupy themselves with feminine pursuits, to dress like girls and to frequent women's societies...They generally, but not always have a banal sentimentalism, they are fond of religious forms and ceremonies, they admire fine clothes and luxurious apartments; they dress their hair and 'fake' themselves with a coquetry which often exceeds that of women (Greenberg 385).

In order to negotiate his rites of passage successfully, the boy must integrate an overselected construction into his subjectivity which, makes "other," what was once central to his psychic constitution. The demarcation of socially imposed limits on his sexuality rezones his once amorphous drive toward gratification into a binary opposition of normal/perverse. Within the confines of patriarchally defined masculinity, that which is most "perverse" or opposite to the "normal" male is the homosexual male. Ironically though, the homosexual is not actually the "other" of the male conceptualized as "normal," but unquestionably internal to the genesis of his self-definition. Mary Douglas has described culture as a "system at war with itself" (140) and by extension, the male body can be seen as a system of contradicting drives at war with its perverse double.
The most extreme threat to the true form of something comes not so much from its absolute opposite or its direct negation, but in the form of its perversion; somehow the perverse threat is inextricably rooted in the true and the authentic, while being, in spite of (or rather because of) the connection, also the utter contradiction of the true and authentic. This connects with and partly explains another paradox of perversion: it is very often perceived as at once utterly alien to what it threatens, and yet, mysteriously inherent within it (Dollimore 121).

Although it could be construed as such, I do not believe Dollimore is inferring that male heterosexuality is the "true and authentic," but rather that within the normative construction of heterosexual masculinity reside the roots of what it perceives to be its "other." The organization of male sexuality according to object choice is the response to successively repressing drives existing from birth. In the name of civilizing the subject, a discourse of perversity is generated around the intrinsic but troublesome homoerotic moment of male experience. Heterosexual defined masculinity can therefore be viewed as the "true and authentic other," since it is a consequence of the gendered subject's incorporation into his body of an ideology that views homosexuality as counter-productive. Dollimore
illustrates the centrality of homosexuality to the definition of heterosexuality by looking closer at the entire oedipal myth and tracing its homoerotic origins.

That Oedipus kills his father and marries his mother is well known. Less so is the fact that the tragic sequence is initiated because Oedipus' father, Laius, loved a beautiful youth, Chrysippus. Hera, the guardian of marriage, is angered by this and punishes the Thebans for not preventing that love. So the very myth which psychoanalysts appropriate to normalize heterosexuality already has homosexuality inscribed at its centre; that which normatively sanctions heterosexuality is rooted in what it would contain. Mythologically, the perverse dynamic was always already there (Dollimore 204).

Dollimore's reading of the Oedipus myth represents another dynamic inherent in the process of bringing sexuality under the control of a dominant social discourse. This is, namely, Foucault's contention that where there is power, there is resistance to that power, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power... [Power relationship's] existence depends on a multiplicity of points of resistance: these play the role of adversary target, support, or handle in power relationships. These points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network (95).

Homosexuality represents then, in both the Oedipal
myth and in the male body, a point of resistance to the power exercised by the heterosexist discourse of Western society. This point of resistance to the limits imposed on masculinity exists prior to the construction of heterosexual primacy. The reification of genital heterosexuality is a profound reaction to original polymorphous perversity, whose reduction to a strict procreative function represents a discursive strategy for social control. Homosexuality, as a moment of resistance to the ideology that has colonized the male body and forged it into an economic and sexual weapon,

returns in and as a reverse discourse, moving from the margins to the centre, from construction to presence but a presence still in terms of, or working in terms of, the initial construction; incipient, halting, yet finally challenging precisely because 'power' has created, become dependent upon, incorporated it (Dollimore 227).

As a reverse discourse, homosexuality becomes a means through which we can deconstruct the rigid categories of gender and sexuality. In the process, homosexuality as a "perverse" construction will cease to exist, becoming merely one possible human sexual expression. Considering homosexuality integral to the overall definition of masculin-
ity and not the "perverse other" of the heterosexual male will cause a chain reaction of ideological de-centering as the once marginalized becomes unquestionably proximate to the culturally contrived ideal. The rites of passage that serve to inscribe the tenets of warrior masculinity can be analyzed as a form of socially sanctioned violence against the bodies of boys. Although rites of passage can function in a positive sense by conveying the cultural values necessary for the continuation of a given society and the subject's successful assimilation into the group, they are also implicated as the means for codifying violence into one's subjectivity. The process of transmuting corporeal violence into a discourse of natural law and an inherent male characteristic is merely a property of a particular ideology ensuring its longevity.

The masculine ideological stance issuing from a violent, patriarchal culture will, as a function of ideological production, order objective reality to fit its exigencies. The rigid dualities imposed upon one's subjective consciousness by a culture of war, which is responsible for constructing the original categories of
active/passive, concurrently reduces the body to its genital function. A subjective awareness that follows the spatial reduction of one's sexuality to a single point, contributes to the social configuration of gender and sexual identity according to a model of acceptable/perverse.

Rites of passage integrate these social configurations into the public body, but they also regulate ideology by requiring the neophyte to experience a potentially transgressive liminality. During this "dangerous" state, in which the subject is beyond the categorizations of the group and therefore most menacing, a point of resistance to the dominant discourse is marked. Although the initiate usually accepts the teachings of the elders as incontrovertible, the subversive nature of liminality allows for the possibility that the ideological constructs will not be fully integrated with the subject. The permeable nature of ego boundaries also ensures that what is marginalized and made "other", "perverse" or "taboo", will continue to exert its influence regardless of how deeply it has been repressed. As a discursive strategy, homosexuality functions for Hubert Fichte as a means of delimiting the
margins and allowing the re-entrance of the "other" to critique the ideology that has relegated homosexuality to the perverse margins and made violent masculinity into its sacred text.

As we turn our attention to Fichte's texts, we will be able to see how rites of passage operate in the social field that he represents and how the re-emergence of the "perverse" subverts the full adoption of the constructs of a heterosexist and violent masculinity in favor of a reintegration of one's queer subjectivity.
CHAPTER II

Detlev, the main character of Hubert Fichte's Das Waisenhaus (1965), continues the literary tradition of the social "outsider" who, because of his/her position outside of the dominant discourse, is able to present a critique of the surrounding milieu. This text is Detlev's reminiscence about the year he spends in a Bavarian orphanage in order to escape the bombings of his native Hamburg. The orphanage, run by Catholic sisters, is predominantly haven to children who have lost their parents to the war. Detlev is also placed in the orphanage by his mother in order to disguise his mixed "racial" status of being a German-Jew. The text both begins and ends with Detlev waiting for his mother's arrival. The narrative inside this frame allows us to examine the rites of passage that Detlev experiences and how the exigencies of his violent culture become written onto the bodies of both Detlev and the other children. By examining these rites of
passage, we are able to understand the ideology that has initially constructed these social rituals and understand the process of ideological reproduction.

Detlev's role in the text is assigned by the first line of the novel. "Detlev steht abseits von den anderen auf dem Balkon" (9), establishing Detlev's role in the narrative as both an observer and separate from the world in which he lives. He is physically removed from the other orphans and positioned above them. The space between them allows for a degree of clarity that would be wanting if Detlev's subjective understanding were still influenced by the group.

As an outsider, Detlev provides us with the lens through which we witness the rites of passage he experiences in National Socialist Germany and understand how these rites of passage mediate the ideology that has produced them.

Zwischen das Auge, das wahrnimmt, und den Gegenstand, der wahrgenommen wird, schiebt Hubert Fichte optische Geräte, die das Sehen seiner Protagonisten verzerrt wiedergeben (Schäfer 26).

Although one could not conceive of the "Detlev" character as a true Picaro, Fichte, as
a student of Baroque literature,¹ was well acquainted with the Picaresque as a literary device. Like Grimmelshausen's Simplicissimus and Grass's Oskar Mazerath, Detlev looks back over his life from a present, experienced perspective and in doing so is able to offer a critique of the chaotic circumstances of his youth.

Alle drei Romane [the aforementioned] handeln von Kriegen in Deutschland; in ihnen ist historisches Material...[sie] entwickeln aus der einen Perspektive das Panorama einer Zeit (von Wangenheim 27).

Detlev's look back does not depict an idyllic year spent with the good nuns of Bavaria but elucidates a process, a rite of passage that he undergoes that results in a change in his subjective understanding of the world. The world that Detlev shows the reader is one whose corruption and perversity contrasts sharply with the usually innocent and playful child's world. Located

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within the games and rituals of these war orphans are the violent ideological constructs of their culture. The adult world is reproduced as the children invariably mimic their elders and navigate through the rites of passage that integrate the constructs of the present culture into their subjective awareness.

Detlev's separation from the group affords him the opportunity to recount the past events and attempt to understand them on his own terms. Detlev is able to ascribe meaning to the events of the past year only by being able to remove himself from active participation in the life of the orphanage. His being positioned above and away from the other orphans frames the narrative, the frame being Detlev standing on the balcony waiting for his mother to arrive and bring him back to Hamburg. This passage, which opens the text and recurs shortly before the end, creates a narrative space in which Detlev orders his past year in terms that are meaningful to him.

Detlev enters the orphanage as a little boy who has been well cared for by his mother and has spent his first eight years in the warm, loving home of his grandparents. As a result he appears
as a trusting, perhaps naive boy when he first arrives at the orphanage. Detlev begins his initiation into the group already during the first night. Alfred demands the piece of candy Detlev received from the nuns. "Gib es mir. Ich beschütz dich auch" (28). The group Detlev is entering operates under the dualistic configuration of strong/weak. The heretofore safe world of his mother is replaced by a hostile, dangerous world occupied by boys. The violent undercurrent of submission to power is revealed in the boys' idle bantering about events overheard.

Dann wurde vom Kriegel erzählt, der die Polen im Rathauskeller mit einer Peitsche voller Stahlsterne prügelte, dass man ihr Schreien bei der Heiligen Messe hören konnte...die Polen schneiden in Polen die deutschen Kriegsgefangenen mit der Bandsäge entzwei...in Lauterbach hat ein Knecht dem Bauern und der Frau und den sieben Kindern den Hals durchgeschnitten. Sie schliefen gerade (31).

These reported acts of violence form the backdrop of Detlev's new world. As in most male initiation rites, the boy is separated from the familiar and secure surroundings of his mother's world and introduced to the constructs of the society he in which will be expected to take his place.
Turner and Myerhoff have both described non-Western male initiation rites in which the boys are taken away from their mothers in a mock abduction ritual. The mothers pretend to fight off the aggressors but are complicit in their sons being handed over to the older men, who will attempt to turn the boys into men. Detlev's mother is, first and foremost, ensuring her son's survival by hiding his Jewishness in a Catholic orphanage. "Im Waisenhaus bist du am sichersten" (19). In addition to this, she is responding, like the mothers of tribal societies, to the social imperatives made relevant in her culture. One of the many taboos that she must acquiesce to in her culture is being Jewish.  

Detlev, however, has yet to learn the lesson of how power operates in his society and responds to Alfred's story of Kriegel with, "Die Polen sollten den Kriegel selbst einmal

1. *Das Waisenhaus* is a text rich in interpretative possibilities, out of which I have picked only one, the construction of masculinity for study. The construction of "Jewishness" and Detlev's relation to his society would open up another very important dimension to this text.
durchprügeln" (31). The naivete of his remark belies Detlev's status as neophyte. He is entering a group whose configurations of power are, at this point, still unknown. Coming from the comparatively safe world of his mother and grandparents, Detlev is unprepared for participation in either the group of boys or in the larger fascist society that is mirrored by the orphans.

Soon after Detlev's arrival at the orphanage, he is confronted with his first exposure to a violent exercise of power. In this new male world, Detlev is harangued, albeit without success, into relinquishing his candy. He then later hears the stories of what men do to each other in war. In Detlev's mind, power becomes a grotesque exercise by his equating it with extreme violence.

Detlev begins to link power and violence; he sees those who hold power as horrifying.

Although this unfortunate nun does not figure in the narrative beyond this passing reference, she inadvertently signals to Detlev one of the faces of power. Her grotesque appearance is a mask of sorts that becomes part of the "sacra" of this world. What is communicated or instructed by her appearance is that the holders of power are to be feared. Her ugliness places her outside the social construction of beauty and thereby makes her less human. Because she represents a figure of power, the equation between authority and its potential to transgress his "safe" world is made. It is because of the Mother Superior's startling appearance that Detlev becomes fearful of her.

Detlev's fear of power is reinforced when a neighborhood man, dressed up to look like Saint Nikolaus, comes to Detlev and his mother to dispense his rewards or punishments. He is, however, so horrifying to look at, that he could only be linked to punishment.

Der Klasel hatte keine Augen, keine Nase, keinen Mund. Sein Gesicht bestand aus einer platten, käsigem, schlappenden Fleischmasse. An Stelle der Augen hatte er kleine Wülste ohne Augenweiß, ohne Pupillen, ohne Lider, ohne Wimpern...statt der Hände guckten aus den Ärmeln schwarze Klumpen ohne Finger...mit den beiden Klumpen hielt er
einen Sack (142).

Der Klasel is part of the cultural text that teaches its neophytes that there are powers greater than them that can reward behavior if it conforms to society's standards, or it can mete out terrible punishments. Der Klasel looks dangerous, but more insidious than this distorted version of Saint Nikolaus, is his evil wife who remains unseen.

Sie ist siebenmal so schlimm... sie hat ein rotes und ein grunes Auge... sie findet einen in jedem Versteck. Sie holt jeden, den sie haben will. Sie peitscht die bösen Kinder durch, die artigen bekommen keinen Lohn von ihr... Die Kinder kriegen nichts bei ihr zu essen. Sie fressen sich die Haare vom Kopf... das Schlimmste ist, man weiss nie genau, wann sie kommt und in welche Häuser sie einkehrt und wen sie mitnimmt (143).

The description of Klasel's wife ominously approximates the psychological terror tactics used by the Gestapo to keep people afraid. The elements of omnipotence and surprise reflect the exercise of power in Detlev's world, which is mythologized in the figure of the evil wife. She becomes a cultural invention, from whom the child-initiates learn that self-vigilance is necessary to maintain the boundaries of socially acceptable behavior and keep the powers of evil in the margins of society.
The figures of Klasel, his wife and, to a lesser extent, the grotesque image of the Mother Superior, work together to create a culture of fear. These images configure a malevolent power in Detlev's mind. The violence of the culture is a reality with which Detlev must contend, although the images used to prop up the power relationships will invariably show their inconsistencies.

Siegfried embodies one such inconsistency. He prods Detlev to plan a coup to topple Alfred, the unofficial head of the boys. Siegfried revels in the comparison to his namesake and says, "Ich bin sowieso sehr mutig. Siegfried ist der erste Held unseres Volkes"(107). As Alfred learns of the plot against him, Siegfried hides, only to be found by Alfred. Siegfried, the German hero, behaves in a most unheroic fashion and strikes a quick compromise with Alfred.


The result of Siegfried's cowardice is that Detlev is held responsible for the action against Alfred.
and subsequently beat up by the other boys. Detlev sees that the hero, or the one holding the power, is one who can adapt completely to its dictates.

This hero also shows the fragility of his belief system by invoking the supernatural to justify his violence. Power legitimizes itself by conflating its violence with a transcendent purpose. As the boys kick Detlev in the face, they say,

Detlev wird vom Herrgott gestraft...der Herrgott hat den kleinen Xaver ausersehen, um den Detlev zu schlagen...So geschlagen ist er in seinen Sünden(119).

We clearly see in the above passage Geertz's contention that ideology is a deformation of understanding "by the pressure of...hate, desire, anxiety, or fear"(197). Because Detlev never fully acquiesced to the exigencies of power by his own volition, he must be punished for this transgression. Subservience to power is the religion to which one must conform. When this taboo is broken, its sacred importance can be made immanent only in punishing the transgressor, which we see through the boys' justification of their violence by claiming service to God.
The conflation of religion and politics as a means of socially sanctioning the use of power is a recurring motif in Das Waisenhaus. It becomes part of the social text, whose beliefs are reproduced in the boyhood rituals that Detlev experiences. As is typical with most children, Detlev imitates the adult world.

Die Leute in der Kirche standen auf, Detlev stand auf. Sie knieten sich hin, Detlev kniete sich hin. Wenn sie sangen, versuchte er die Töne im voraus zu erraten und zwischen die Stimmen der Waisenhauszößlinge hineinzusingen(34).

In order to participate fully in the church service, it is necessary to learn the rituals that comprise the mass. The rituals symbolize a deeper belief, however, and are a type of shorthand that communicate a certain social truth to the participants. Because the church purports to be the one sacred place where the higher truths can be revealed, it often finds itself appropriated by those wanting to justify their hold on power. "Der Pfarrer fing an zu brüllen: Unser Vater...das Reich Gottes und das Reich...das Reich..."(35). Under the guise of learning a truth that is linked with the divine, the institution of power inserts itself into this sacred text.
and becomes a cultural "truth." National Socialism fuses with the Kingdom of God and secures its right to exist.

During the process of ritual passage, the initiates are separated from the once familiar and presented with the images and symbols they must eventually incorporate into their subjective understanding of the world. When violence and a culture of fear join with a higher good, they are accepted as belonging to the necessary order of the world. Detlev encounters many of the religious images of saints and martyrs that communicate, among other things, the social acceptance of violence against the body for some greater good. Bohrer sees the text's many images of tortured saints as "ein symbolistischer Legendenton, der das Grauen der Zeit verschärft und gleichzeitig, distanziert" (125). More unsettling, though, is the inclusion of images of Hitler in the religious sacra. He becomes a sacred object, a kind of holy father who can control and destroy with impunity because of his link with a higher purpose.

'Unser Führer war ein Mauermann', stand auf einem blauen Hauchbildchen. Der Führer war in gelblichen Linien auf das Hauchbildchen gedrückt. Der Führer sah
zu einem halbfertigen Haus hinauf. Balken stacken in die Höhe (80).

The Führer looking up binds his political ideology with what is greater and more powerful than Detlev.

The conflation of the abuse of power and religion is seen not only with Hitler but with the passion of Christ. The graphic description that Anna gives Detlev concerning the cruelties done to the body of Jesus belies a prior transformation of her subjectivity by means of National Socialism. She confuses the physical tortures practiced by the Gestapo with the torments suffered by Christ.

...sie haben ihn gepeitscht, auch mit Stahlsternen in den Riemen, wie es der Kriegel tut...denk dir, sie täten es mit dir hier. Deine Haut würde zerreißen...du kannst gar nicht alles wissen, was der Herr Jesus Christus für unsere Schuld leiden musste. Sie haben ihn Judenkönig genannt. Sie haben geschrien: Dem Judenhund, dem Judenschwein geschieht es ganz recht. Sie haben Fingernägel ausgezogen, unter Wasser gesteckt, Füsse zerstampft. Sie haben ihn an eine Elektrisiermaschine gebunden (60).

When religion and politics are conflated, one can be used to buttress the other. They are able to maintain their ideological constructs by creating a system of taboos and fear of punishment. The
anxiety that surrounds the transgression of a taboo has the effect of conveying that one's body is helpless against subjection to outside malevolent forces.

As part of Detlev's ritual passage into the culture of fear, he learns about the presence and function of hell from Anna, a girl whose non-Aryan looks ["Anna kommt in die Hölle. Annas Augen sind braun"(12)] and epilepsy ["Anna ist eine Epileptikerin. Das ist sowieso lebensunwertes Material"(108)] banish her to the margins of orphanage life. She also contrasts sharply with Detlev, as she has internalized every belief, be it political or religious, to which she has been exposed. Anna has a fear of hell that places her in double-bind situations where punishment is inevitable.

Anna hat mich an Alfred verraten, weil sie Angst hatte, in die Hölle zu kommen. Dann hatte sie Angst, noch mal in die Hölle zu kommen, weil sie mich an Alfred verraten hatte; dann hat sie Alfred und den Odel und den Joachim-Teufel an mich verraten(13).

The ideology of National Socialism recognized the usefulness of fear as an agent of social control and this construct is effectively reproduced in Anna. She successfully learns her lessons and is
a mirror of the adult world in which she functions. Anna has internalized the dictates of the larger society to such an extent that her body is capable of punishing itself through her epilepsy whenever she thinks she has committed any impropriety.

One day Detlev and Anna are walking down a boulevard discussing how Jesus Christ is everywhere and hears everything. He presumably hears her say that a passing truck is laden with weapons from a near-by arms factory. Once her words have registered, she screams, "'Der Teufel kommt'... sie sah schräg nach oben. Sie versuchte sich in die Hand zu beissen. Sie fiel um. Sie schlug um sich"(64). After she recovers she says,

Ich hatte solche Angst vor dem donnernden Lastwagen...sag nicht, dass ich gesagt habe, dass es eine Munitionsfabrik gibt. Wir werden sonst abgeholt und hingerichtet(64).

Anna demonstrates to Detlev, once again, the conflation of religion and political ideology. In this world, both religion and politics seek to order human subjective understanding through either the agency of the devil or police action. The adoption of cultural constraints signal the successful passage through the rituals meant to
teach societal beliefs. Detlev, constructed as the "other" from the start, experiences the rites that operate in the child's world of the orphanage, but never completely subscribes to their convictions. This is of course noticed by the rest of the group and in order to reimpose a state of equilibrium to their social order, Detlev is forced to comply with the norms. Detlev, lacking the others' sense of shame and guilt over every imaginary or real infraction, is branded as a heretic for actions such as, "er hat sich beim Gehen die Hose vorn gehalten"(68). His disregard for a rule of which he is unaware, calls into question the supposed universality of this taboo. For the group to maintain its claim to power, it must maintain what it has configured as either acceptable or perverse. Detlev represents a threat to this social code, be punished for his transgression and forced to accept the rule.

Der Detlev ist verloren, wenn er so weitermacht. Er muss zurückgeschreckt werden, sonst lässt der Herr Jesus ihn fallen, und er kommt all Ewigkeit nicht mehr aus der Hölle raus. Wir wollen eine Nacht den Teufel spielen, damit der Detlev sieht, was ihn erwartet(69).

The children have learned to cloak their actions by invoking the name of God.
The children who have sufficiently integrated the culture's constructs with their subjective understanding of the world are now able to censor themselves to such an extent that outside policing is no longer necessary. Detlev's mother also reveals her internalized fear of transgressing social taboos by encouraging Detlev to select out for inclusion into his construction of reality only those things that approximate the National Socialist version of reality. She has, to some extent, acquiesced to power and attempts to initiate Detlev into fascist ideology by encouraging him to stop trusting his own perceptions.


Detlev is also being initiated into the necessity of creating boundaries in and around himself, so that categories of "self" and "other" arise, augmenting the already present binaries of acceptable/perverse. These categories manifest in Detlev's world in many ways, one being the prodigious restrictions as to where one can and cannot touch oneself.
Once the "self" is configured within the limits of "acceptable", one's subjectivity is narrowed to conform to the prevailing interpretation of reality. Aspects of one's experience are negated or suppressed in the interest of maintaining cultural conventions. Detlev's mother relates this imperative to him as she prepares to leave him at the orphanage for the first time. "Auch hier sollten wir stille sein. Nichts sehen. Nichts sagen. Die Leute wollen keine Mutter mit einem Jungen ohne Vater - oder mit einem solchen Vater"(19). The mother accurately recognizes the social convention concerning a "proper" family structure, a limit she has transgressed. In order to avoid punishment she erects boundaries around herself to camouflage her "otherness." Although Detlev is unable to articulate the reasons, he is nonetheless aware that he is different in some way. He is also beginning to be aware of the series of boundaries that determine and maintain his position of difference. Detlev is able to understand that the boundaries are a reproduction of the various layers of power in his culture. After his arrival in the orphanage, he contemplates running away, as he misses his mother and
Hamburg. He is able to control his own behavior just by thinking about his lack of power in relation to the all-powerful men in his world.

Wenn ich durch die Tür komme, fängt mich der Kriegel. Wenn mich der Kriegel nicht fängt, holt mich in Hamburg der Schutzmann. Wenn mich der Schutzmann nicht findet, holt mich der Führer(26).

The checks and balances to which Detlev responds, prevent him from running away from the orphanage but also serve to maintain his marginality. Being able to leave this marginalized space would imply that the boy is not confined by the institutions that regulate social behavior. His behavior is, however, confined and independent action is a boundary that cannot be crossed without encountering Kriegel and his whip. Detlev's initiation is teaching him the tenets that operate in this culture of fear. We must remember that cultures direct their adherents' attention toward certain phenomena and away from others. Since it is not possible for people to know more than a small fraction of the consequences their actions pose for them in the present (let alone in the future), they must proceed according to an attention rejecting and directing framework (Wildavsky 60).

Detlev is learning to reject those ideas and behaviors such as enjoying the nakedness of someone of the same sex or enjoying a mother's
touch for example, that are not compatible with the fascist society in which he lives. By doing so, he is integrating the conventions of the public domain with his private self.

By viewing everything outside himself as potentially perverse, Detlev maintains his sense of "otherness" and isolation from the world, while at the same time attempting to discover it. His mother encourages his suspiciousness of other people as a survival tactic and says,

Du sollst nicht mehr zu dem mauligen Flötenlehrer im Rosenhof gehen. Ich will nichts gegen ihn behaupten. Wenn du ihn siehst, musst du ihn freundlich grüssen...er machte Bemerkungen. Wer weiss, was er damit bezweckte(52).

The mother's instructions are understandable, since she has been attempting to hide her son's Jewish background. In accepting the social restraints imposed on her, she becomes a casualty of these conventions. She has on more than one occasion had to find other living quarters because of Detlev's illegitimate birth.

Der Veterinär hat dir (said to the mother) doch gekündigt. Er äusserte: Eine unverheiratete Frau mit einem Sohn. Sie verstehen. Wir leben in einer gläubigen Stadt(106).

Detlev's passage is from someone whose subjectivity is open to the outside world, to one
who, like his mother, constructs his subjectivity based on a binary opposition of self/other. We will soon see how the culture encodes its beliefs in the rituals that Detlev experiences in the orphanage. The first lesson that Detlev has aptly learned is that "otherness" is always something negative, even if it is present in oneself. His mother is well aware of her "otherness" and the dangerous position in which it has placed her. Out of fear, she tries to show Detlev the necessity of adopting the dominant mode of being and being always on guard against showing one's deviance. This is the first experience Detlev has with a "warrior" mentality, as he is called on to be ever vigilant against an unseen enemy. Creating a category of uniformity should, at least theoretically, make one feel safe and secure in this world of sameness. It can, however, contribute to a sense of isolation that only increases one's perception of the outside world as hostile. The night during which the boys appear to Detlev as demons wanting to teach Detlev a lesson, Detlev lies in his bed waiting for them to "arrive." "Die Luft um ihn herum war wie aus schwarzem Glas"(71). He lies in bed surrounded by
a blackness that separates him from the others. Detlev, the transgressor and deviant, is isolated and made more vulnerable to censure by the group.

As mentioned, the net effect of this dualistic thinking is to construct the world along the lines of self/other. One of the orphans, Joachim-Teufel, is a testimony to his "otherness". Joachim's slight physique characterizes him as deficient and worthy of the wrath of the group.

[Er] heisst Joachim-Teufel, weil er vor Bosheit nicht fett wird...Der Joachim-Teufel war nicht gross und stark...Alle ekelten sich vor ihm. Die Grossen, Starken fürchteten sich vor ihm...Die Schwestern kniffen ihn in die Ohren. Sie gaben ihm keine Bonbons(71).

A framework of morality is superimposed onto Joachim's thinness, which marks his difference as negative. He becomes an object of disgust based on a single physical characteristic, a characteristic that effectively creates a boundary around him. His stature determines that others will react to him based on their perceptions of him as weak and reprehensible. That the configuration of Joachim as evil is reinforced by the actions of the nuns points to the process of how power reproduces its ideology. The National Socialist ideology of Aryan perfection elevates physical
traits to signifiers of one's morality and ultimately, to whether or not one is human. In the orphan's world, non-Aryan characteristics are the result of sinful actions. Like the mark of Cain, they identify those who have transgressed a limit. "Alfred hat grüne Augen. Weil er Todsünden begangen hat..."(12).

Detlev's oversized ears are noticed immediately by the other boys and the teachers, who equate this slight physical deviance with the extreme social deviance of looking like a Jew in National Socialist Germany. "Deine Ohren sind so gross wie Judenohren, sagte die Lehrerin..."(10). This configures Detlev as the "other", as the outsider who may never learn the rules of the dominant group because of an "essential" difference marked by his ears. Detlev's "otherness" is reinforced in the text's opening sentences through Detlev's position above and away from the main group. One of the last things he does before he leaves the orphanage is inadvertently to smear bird droppings on himself. Although Detlev has survived a year in the orphanage, he has not completely assimilated into the group. His being marked by bird feces unmistakably determines his
difference and devaluation by the group.

Although Detlev undergoes the rites of passage that mark his entrance into the group, this difference prevents his full acceptance by the group. Any difference noted by the other boys makes Detlev suspect for being a Jew, although this is always blurred by Detlev's other acceptable traits. "Deine Ohren sind gross wie Judenohren, aber du arbeitest fleissig, du hast einen arischen Ausdruck im Gesicht, und deine Haare sind blond"(81). The size of his ears signals a difference as does his Hamburg accent. Since Detlev cannot speak Bavarian, he is once again suspected of being a Jew. "Was ist das Überhaupt - ein Opa? So was sagt man nicht. Bist du ein Jude"(103)? Detlev is later asked the same question and replies, "In Hamburg, sprechen sie alle so. Außer dem weiss ich gar nicht, was ein Jude ist"(108). All Detlev knows is that being suspected of being a Jew is enough to set him apart from the group. The danger of being Jewish is made evident when he asks his mother what a Jew is. In order to discuss the matter, she finds it necessary to retreat into a remote but safe space.

Sie stand auf. Sie ging über die Strasse. Sie ging bis an den Rand der
Stadt. Sie schloss die Haustür auf. Sie schloss die Zimmertür unter den Dachziegeln auf. Sie fasste nach Detlev, zog ihn in ihr Zimmer. Sie schloss die Tür ab(164).

It is only here in this hidden, marginalized space that the mother feels secure enough to tell Detlev that his father was Jewish. The mother is responding, on one level, to the very real fear of the Gestapo but also reveals the distance between the dominant discourse and the marginalized discourse of the outsider. One also sees this in her characterization of a Jew. To Detlev's question as to what a Jew actually is, she responds,

Ein Jude ist jemand, der sich nicht gerne wäscht, der unordentlich ist und mit schlurfendem Gang geht, der sich nicht geradehält, Detlev, und der beim Sitzen die Fussspitzen nach innen kehrt - sagen sie. Du bist ein Halbjude(165).

The Jew is constructed as the carrier of social and bodily chaos; as someone who defies the boundaries that society has formulated to order experience.

Detlev is seen as an outsider by many groups. To the Bavarians he is a foreign northerner, to the Catholics, a fallen Protestant, were his Jewishness known, he would become subhuman to the racially pure Aryans. It is fittingly symbolic then, that his final moments in the orphanage are
spent soiled with bird feces. Mary Douglas postulates that dirt represents chaos, the disorder of a system.

Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements. This idea of dirt takes us straight into the field of symbolism and promises a link-up with more obviously symbolic systems of purity (Douglas 35).

Detlev represents chaos, at least to those who have incorporated the culturally defined notions of what constitutes order. Because Detlev simultaneously embodies so many opposites, he could, theoretically, threaten several groups at once. His unique position allows him to claim membership in all or none of the various subcultures. Because of this, Detlev's presence demonstrates the relativity of social constructs that serve to define his reality. This would imply that his withdrawal from any one group would render its social codes meaningless. At several points in the text, Detlev cuts himself off from the group and instead of his losing his identity, the group loses its structure. "Detlev kneift die Lider zusammen. Die Waisenhauszöglinge schwimmen durcheinander wie die tutenden Barkassen im Hafen" (17). At the end of the text, Detlev tries
to remember everything that happened to him throughout the preceding year, but "auch sie (seine Gedanken) verschwinden am Schluss...Detlev entfernt sich von dem Gott im Waisenhaus"(172). The fellow orphans, who were important in helping Detlev form his subjective assessment of his life in the home, "sinken beim Abschied bereits ins ununterscheidbar Bedeutungslose zurück"(Heimann: 245). This is not to say that they did not contribute to Detlev's understanding his world. The orphans were instrumental in enacting the rites of passage that Detlev experienced during his year with them. The rites of passage, in turn, are what communicate to Detlev the norms and values of his society. Although these norms have meaning outside of the orphanage, Detlev's dismissal of them shows that this value system is only important within the context of the system that created it.

Detlev does not realize his marginality until he moves away from the familiar surroundings of Hamburg and life with his mother. This is a precondition of most male initiation rites, namely the separation of the boy from the mother's world. It is only after this separation occurs and the
neophyte's liminal status places him between two worlds, that the unlearning of the mother's and the learning of the father's rules can begin. Detlev suspects that he has been brought to a sacred place when he questions his mother about his conception of the orphanage based on a spelling error. "Warum schreibt man Waisenhaus mit ai? Detlev dachte an weise Männer mit langen weissen Bärten und spitzen Hüten...(21). Detlev's misunderstanding hints at his realization that he is in a place where knowledge resides; a place where "sacred" wisdom is passed down.

The "sacredness" of the orphanage is evident to Detlev by the presence of the nuns. Shortly after his arrival, he learns of the supernatural powers the sisters are said to possess, which reinforces the belief that higher truths occupy the ritual space of the orphanage. Detlev is told by a fellow orphan,

> wenn einer von der Partei eine Schwester verhaftet und hinrichtet, hat er keine Ruhe mehr bei Tag und Nacht...nachts würde sie in seinem Bett liegen; aus ihren Wunden würde das Blut hervorbrechen; und immer würde sie heulen, wenn er einschlafen will(32).

Perhaps Detlev instinctually realizes that something is going to change after being brought to this
place of initiation. As he waits one afternoon for his mother, "er fürchtete, die Mutter nicht wiederzuerkennen" (37). This speaks more than just to a child's separation anxiety. Detlev generalizes that since his outer world has changed so dramatically, then everything else must have changed with it. The liminal subject moves from a known, experienced world to a new, unknown world where the codes have yet to be learned.

Those already initiated view the neophyte as a threat to their conception of social order since he has not yet learned to order his experience and interpret reality as they do. Until he does, he poses a risk to their truths. Detlev is first viewed as the group's enemy. "Feind hört mit. -Der Detlev ist kein Feind. -Das weisst du gar nicht" (29). In order to assess Detlev's acceptability, the boys ask him if he belongs to the Catholic church and, more importantly, if his mother is a National Socialist. The orphans are reproducing an ideology that probably has little meaning for them, in light of their ages. That they reproduce it nonetheless shows how powerfully social rituals impart cultural codes and values.

Detlev realizes that he does not fit the
group's conception of what he should be, so begins to investigate what he must do in order to fit in. Religion becomes the first area into which Detlev must be incorporated.

Wie werd ich heilig? Du musst ein Blatt finden mit dem Herrn Jesus Christus drauf...Du müsstest drei Tage lang ein zehn Meter langes Kreuz über den Stadtwall tragen...(59).

Accomplishing any one of the above tasks would call for extreme dedication or physical subjugation. Detlev must undergo neither of these to effect a transition to group acceptance. What must occur, however, is the suppression of his ego to the dictates of the cultural super-ego. The mandates of his super-ego impinge on his growing subjective interpretation of the world around him and he begins to order social behavior into the binary of acceptable/unacceptable. He is told: "Lass dich auf nichts ein...lach über keinen Witz..."(40).

Perhaps because Detlev embodies so many disparate cultural groups at once, he does not embrace with the fanatical devotion that permeated National Socialist society any one group identity. This is perceived by the others as arrogance and Detlev endures an initiation rite in which the
boys attempt to terrorize him while dressed as devils. Their stated goal is to force Detlev's humility. "Willst du von nun an demütig sein? Dann geht es noch mal gut" (78). The ritual that Detlev experiences is also punishment for supposed transgressions he has perpetrated against the moral order of the orphanage by continuing to touch his genitals. Even though the appearance of the boy-devils is punishment, it can most certainly be seen as a rite of passage since the hoped for result is the incorporation of the moral imperatives into the body and mind of the initiate. The boys list five sins that Detlev has committed. Of the five, three directly concern his body. The devils appeared to Detlev,

weil du dich jeden Sonnabendabend nackt von deiner Mutter waschen lässt...weil du das Christkindlein mit was Unkeuschem zwischen den Beinen gemalt hast...Du hast dich auf der Fahrt nach Aichach an das Unkeusche gefasst und es der Anna zeigen wollen (76).

For these "sins", the boys run around Detlev's bed late one night, threatening him with eternal damnation. The boys are not only the aggressors in this act, but also are the only ones that can protect him from their further violence. After the ritual game is over, Alfred says to Detlev,
"deine Mutter kümmert sich nicht um dich...Wir haben dich beschützt. Uns musst du das danken" (79). One result of this ritual is to move Detlev from the mother's world to the world of men. In the absence of adult men, this transition is effected by the older boys. Regardless of the players, the result is the same with a clear message. He must renounce the provocative world of his mother and incorporate the new world of violent masculinity into his body and psyche.

As we have seen in our discussion of Marcuse, libidinal energy is so narrowly functionalized in Western society that all that remains is a phallic-centric ideology of procreation. The surplus repression involved in maintaining this constricted sexuality gives rise to a culture of male violence. Detlev's constant exposure to Catholic rituals and religious symbols makes him increasingly aware of the Church's equation of physical desire with immorality. Detlev tells the older boy, Alfred, of his last visit with his mother, which included being bathed by his mother. Alfred, who is also the most powerful of the boys, makes the pronouncement, "Und dabei bist du ganz nackt. Das ist eine grosse Sünde" (46).
Nakedness is a taboo because it reminds the ego that the sexually-charged id has never been fully extinguished. Desire still lies hidden in the folds and curves of the body waiting to disrupt society's moral order, particularly if the body is the same sex as the viewing subject.

Siegfried stand nackt...Detlev sah Siegfrieds Haut von oben bis unten an. Er sah...die Haare in der Mitte, wo das Unkeusche anfing. (Siegfried) buckte sich. Detlev sah hinten, zwischen dem Spalt über den Beinen...Das darf man nicht (sehen). Das ist unkeusch(86).

The ideological construct that Detlev is supposed to learn is that neither pleasure in one's own body ["Detlev, fass dir nicht vorne hin. Das ist unkeusch"(56)] nor in the body of another is permissible. The violent National Socialist culture could not continue were a less restrictive expression of sexual energy a standard social practice.¹ With the constriction of sexual

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¹This point warrants further clarification. I am not implying that the practice of homosexuality somehow prevents the violent exercise of power in a fascist society. There was indeed a homoerotic moment in the early days of National Socialism, not only with Ernst Roehm and the beginnings of the SA, but with the entire discourse surrounding the adulation of the Aryian male. We have already discussed the transmutation of drives from the erotic to the violent via Marcuse and Kaufman. Theweleit also sees a homoerotic moment male aggression.
and sacrifice although his outsider status prevents him from fully assimilating like the other boys. What Detlev does learn via the agency of social ritual is that the father is a symbol of power. The father's world has the capacity to mete out punishment for social transgressions, whereas the mother's world merely responds to the dictates of the father's. The father is characterized as omnipotent, even though he is ironically absent from Detlev's life.¹ "Aber mein Vater ist gross und viel kräftiger als der Kirchturm. Mein Vater ist so gross, dass er bis an die Wolken geht"(113). Detlev does not come to view power as a feature of adults but

¹"Homosexualität, vor allem die latente, die über erhebliche Mengen gestauter Triebenergie verfügt, die auf aggressive Entladung drängt, ist von manchen Autoren als wesentlicher Bestandteil der Aggressionslust des soldatischen Mannes genannt worden"(Theweleit 61). This type of homosexuality, however, appears more as an eroticized exercise of power than an affirmative, symmetrical queer experience. The point is, if queer desire is not marginalized, its central presence in a culture would serve to continually deconstruct the conflated categories of active/passive and strong/weak as determinors of "appropriate" male behavior.

¹We can not forget that Detlev is responding to "the father" as a social sign denoting power. His real father is a Jew is National Socialist Germany and hardly in a position of omnipotence.
specifically as a male characteristic. Even God is engendered and the power of an adult dismissed because of a female attribute. "Vielleicht ist er doch der liebe Gott? Nein. Der liebe Gott hat keine Frauenstimme"(146).

What Detlev has begun to incorporate into his subjectivity are the properties of masculinity. The appearance of the three boy-devils initiate Detlev into the constructs of humility and subservience one must have before male power. Detlev begins to see that his world consists of victors and victims. Some of the fathers must be sacrificed for the good of the other, more powerful fathers. They must, like Christ, fulfill their duty and die for the good of mankind. After Detlev has experienced his first funeral of a soldier felled during a battle, he is able to imagine later,


After a year-long stay in the orphanage, Detlev departs having experienced the rituals that his culture constructs to inculcate its version of masculinity into the bodies and minds of boys.
Detlev does not leave as a fanatical Nazi or devout Catholic but has learned, nonetheless, that masculinity charges one with the prerogative to wage war and mutilate the body. As he is about to leave the orphanage, he begins thinking about his mother and his former life in Hamburg. The boy-protector thinks to himself, "Detlev will seiner Mutter in Lokstedt ein festes Haus bauen, das niemand einreiben kann..."(172). This power comes not from himself, however, but from Detlev's belief in the omnipotence of his father. "Mein Vater ist so gross, bis an die Wolken, denkt Detlev beim Hinausgehen"(172). This is a perplexing moment in the text because, once again, Detlev's subjective awareness seems simultaneously to take him in two opposite directions. Detlev has, to be sure, learned much about masculine socialization, but in the end, the world he fantasizes about preserving and protecting is the former world of his mother. In spite of the social rituals that have shown Detlev how he is to act in his culture, he wishes to maintain the soft, sensual, maternal world. Perhaps because of his status as outsider, he is better able to resist the demands of the dominant discourse. His
liminality has not just been between two social states. Were this the case, it would be easy for Detlev to interchange one social role for another. Detlev as a symbol represents the intersection of several cultural discourses and as such could not, through the agency of rites of passage, be fully incorporated into any one discourse without his conscience choosing. It seems that Detlev's potential membership in several, distinct social groups at once subverts the passive adoption of any one position.

As previously discussed, the atmosphere of the orphanage parallels the society in which it is located, in this case a Catholic society of southern National Socialist Germany. Fear is the prevalent mode of social control, whether it is a fear of hell or fear of the Gestapo. The social rituals are also in place to assist the neophyte in integrating society's dictates into his/her body and mind. We could expect then that once Detlev experienced transformative rituals, he would begin behaving like Alfred or Siegfried. Detlev, however, never adopts the violent masculine stance that defines many of the other boys. His difference, which I attribute to his simulta-
neous inclusion in and exclusion from several groups, prevents him from becoming what this society's rites of passage hope to mold.

Already at the beginning of the narration, Detlev rejects the definition of orphan as something describing him. "Ich bin kein Waisen. Meine Mutti holt mich wieder raus"(22). Although his resistance to the norms of the group maintains his marginalization, it also allows him to form a subjective awareness based on what he chooses and not blindly on what is claimed to be true. After his year is almost over, Detlev sustains his difference from the group. "Detlev dachte: Ich will abtrünnig werden"(160). This position of resistance is one that he maintains throughout the entire year. Whenever Detlev is confronted with something he wants to reject, but cannot, he tries to wish the event or person away.

Wenn es die Feldherrnhalle nicht gäbe, wenn es den Fliegeralarm nicht gäbe, wenn es die drei Teufel mit dem Sarg nicht gäbe,...dann gäbe es München gar nicht,...ich hätte nicht gesehen, wie Schwester Appia aufgebrannt ist, ich hätte nicht gesehen, wie die Christusse in einer langen Reihe nebeneinanderlagen wie Babypuppen mit abgebrochenen Armen(93).
Detlev's frequent use of the subjunctive mood represents more than a lapse into wishful thinking or a child's denial of reality. It rephrases the truths of his life and introduces possibilities other than those present in the orphanage and, according to Heissenbüttel, a moment of hope.

Die gelungene Erzählung überhebt sich der Antithesen. Sie bestärkt eine Hoffnung, die eine bloss psychologische, kritische oder auf tragische Verwicklungen gerichtete Erzählung nicht einlösen könnte (Heissenbüttel 20).

The text shows us the culture of fear that Detlev enters, the social rituals in place in this mirror of the larger society and how his status as outsider protects Detlev from internalizing the violent ideology that informs the other boys' subjectivities. Detlev wants to return to his mother's world and all the comfort that this world symbolized. Detlev's year in the orphanage constitutes a rite of passage in that he was separated from the known, shown the tenets of his new world, and ritually forced to experience them. The end result is, ideally, to function according to the norms of society. Yet this does not occur. After Detlev is beat-up by the other boys hoping to teach Detlev humility, Detlev screams,
Ich will weg. Ich will weg. Ich will weg. Detlev schrie die drei Wörter immer lauter. Zuerst schrie er sie auf den Boden hinunter, dann schlugen sie in AlfreduS Gesicht ein, zuletzt schossen sie durch den ganzen Esssaal bis zu den Mädchen am gegenüberliegenden Fenster (121).

When Detlev leaves the orphanage, he leaves the restrictions that have impinged on him during the previous year. By distancing himself even from "the God" of the orphanage, he dismisses all the "truths" by which he was forced to live(172). The world of violent masculinity no longer mediates his life and he no longer has to interpret his world based on this ideology. He is not totally unaffected, as he most definitely has learned that masculinity is equatable with power. Masculine power resides in the world of the father. Detlev can only imitate his version of this concept until such time that he is physically able to take on this adult role. Because of his status as outsider, we will see in the remaining texts that Detlev does indeed reject the tenets of the dominant fascist discourse and embrace alternative configurations in ordering his understanding of the world and of himself.

Das Waisenhaus, as a narrative reflection on the events of Detlev's year, frame this experience
by positioning Detlev away from the lives and social conditioning that took place. He arrives as an outsider, and in spite of the rigorous attempts by the boys of the orphanage, leaves, marked with bird droppings, as an outsider. He stands on the balcony awaiting a return of the former world. The frame structure has the effect of distancing the events of the past year and creating a distance necessary in order to critique the violent ideology that informs the National Socialist version of masculinity.
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CHAPTER III

Detlefs Imitationen "Grünspan" was published in 1971, three years after Die Palette (1968) and six years after Das Waisenhaus (1965). For the purposes of this dissertation, however, Detlefs Imitationen "Grünspan" will be the second text analyzed. The persona of Detlev is completely subsumed by the character of Jäcki in Die Palette, which is solely concerned with the Jäcki character and his friends in the Hamburger underworld. Detlefs Imitationen "Grünspan" forms a bridge between the first text, Das Waisenhaus, and Die Palette since both Detlev and Jäcki are present in it.

Die Partien, in denen Fichte von Detlev erzählt, beginnen da, wo der Erzähler des Romans, Das Waisenhaus, seinen jungen Helden verliess...(Wallmann).

In an interview with Dieter Zimmer, Hubert Fichte places Detlefs Imitationen "Grünspan" directly after Das Waisenhaus.

Detlefs Imitationen beginnen dort, wo das 'Waisenhaus' aufhörte. Das

Detlevs Imitationen "Grünspan, is moreover, a continuation of Detlev's life after he leaves the Bavarian orphanage. He proceeds with his life in post-fascist Germany and experiences a new set of rites of passage in a new social context. The ideological dictates, however, remain the same as Detlev enters his new world of the theater as a child actor. Detlev's experiences are juxtaposed in the text with those of Jäcki, the adult, queer version of Deltev. Jäcki's life revolves around the characters that populate the bars and clubs of Hamburg nightlife. The back and forth movement in the text between the two worlds of the same person allows us to study further how social rituals communicate a certain ideology and can transform a certain subjective understanding of the world. The transformation that is most evident as the character moves from Detlev to Jäcki is the reconfiguration of homosexuality. Jäcki's socialization in Hamburg's gay clubs provides him with another perceptual framework for ordering his understanding of his desires. Jäcki's stories move queer
desire from the silenced margins where social taboos reside to a discourse central to his world. This has the effect of changing the codes that Detlev learns from perverse to acceptable.

Although they are the same person, Detlev and Jäcki symbolize two very different subjectivities who, in Grünspan, form the point-counterpoint in the dialectic of masculine construction. Detlev continues as the neophyte, participating in the rites of passage that incorporate into his subjectivity the ideologies necessary to function as a man in his society. Detlev has left the mother's world once before and experienced masculinity as the assumption of a position of power, within which people are categorized as being either active or passive. In the orphanage Detlev was an outsider who, in spite of his active participation in the rituals of the boys, was still able to remain somewhat detached from the social conditioning inherent in the rituals. It would be an overstatement, however, to assert that Detlev's outsider status shielded him completely from assuming the status of maleness.

In Grünspan, Detlev returns to his native Hamburg as an outsider, as a Bavarian. "Oma und
Detlev haben Schwierigkeiten, sich zu verstehen.
Detlev sagt: Was hoscht ksokt"?(11) More importantly, Detlev has begun to integrate the cultural directive of male dominance over women. He leaves the orphanage convinced of the omnipotence of the father and vulnerability of the mother, for whom he wants to build a house in order to protect her from the vicissitudes of life. Even though his subjectivity is beginning to be molded into a shape corresponding to the warrior culture in which he lives, he is still a boy and will pass through several more initiations before he fully assumes the role of adult male.

In Detlevs Imitationen "Grünspan", the most important social space where these rites of passage are enacted is on the stage of a Hamburg theater. Let us briefly recall Van Gennep's proposition that the neophyte's socialization experience is conducted in two environments: the sacred and the usual. There are also three phases to ritual passage, which are separation from the usual environment, transition, and incorporation back to the usual(Van Gennep 82). The stage becomes Detlev's sacred space, as it is here, as in the orphanage, where he breaks from the usual
world of his mother. Via the agency of the culturally "sacred" texts of Goethe, Kleist, and others, he is transformed into the boy-hero and the boy-warrior. In keeping with the exercise of power accorded to the heroes of these sacred texts, Detlev also entertains rape fantasies, the violent reflex of the male hero.

Let us recall that social conditioning occurs when the neophyte is in both a liminal physical and psychological state. Liminality assures the readiness of the initiate by removing the former boundaries that served to order the boy's subjective understanding of his world. This is sometimes achieved by geographically relocating the boy to an unfamiliar terrain and ritually transforming him in this space. Böhme sees the stage in Grünspan as this ritual space where, like a phoenix, Detlev rises up out of the ashes of a former identity and assumes a variety of roles in his search for his place in society.

Immer wieder sucht Fichte die Plätze und Augenblicke einer Überwältigung oder Besessenheit, die das Ich für Momente herausschneidet aus dem heraklitischen Fliessen und es verräumlicht, zu einem 'Schauplatz' verwandelt von Mächten und Kräften, die nicht dem 'Eigenen', sondern 'Fremden' angehören"(Böhme 11)
This ritual space assumes different configurations in various cultures. What is common to all rituals that transform a child into an adult is the dissemination of social codes through the agency of narration. Located in these narratives is the ideological apparatus that articulates the boundaries of the world the initiate will come to know. Goethe's *Iphigenie* more than simply teaches Detlev what constitutes high culture or traditional theater. He also learns about mothers and fathers and the sometimes violent dynamics of this relationship. Detlev's participation in the theater becomes a rite of passage, a transforming ritual that portrays to Detlev the boundaries of masculinity.

Im sensus spiritualis ist das Schauspiel ein Ritus der Opferung, welcher der Erzeugung von immaterieller Erlösungs-Substanz dient; dem Stoff der Unvergessenheit... (Böhme 15).

In this sense, the play is a reenactment of mythical knowledge in which the players relinquish their own identity in order to become the figures they portray. The narrative sanctioned for ritual reenactment by a particular culture becomes an authoritative statement of that culture's
ideological constructs.

Popular stories themselves recount what could be called positive or negative apprenticeships: in other words, the successes or failures greeting the hero's undertakings. These successes or failures either bestow legitimacy upon social institutions (the functions of myths), or represent positive or negative models (the successful or unsuccessful hero) of integration into established institutions (legends and tales). Thus the narratives allow the society in which they are told, on the one hand, to define its criteria of competence and, on the other, to evaluate according to those criteria what is performed or can be performed within it (Lyotard 20).

The stage is the space where the initiate, Detlev, learns he must leave the world of the mother and enter the world of men. The fictional mothers constitute a narrative of female power that must be overcome as it threatens to maintain the boy in a passive social role. This is consistent with the ideology of a culture that needs violent male expression to maintain a social order based on a dualistic hierarchy of active/passive. Detlev, playing the role of the young hero in Medea, recognizes the power of the mother and the need to separate from her if he is to assume the role of man.

Ich bin glücklich! Ich bin Orest! Bin ich glücklich, die Mutter vor mir zu sehen mit angsterfülltem Gesicht, vor

Detlev feels powerless about the destruction of a home for the crippled and attempts to armor himself by incorporating a narrative of male power into his definition of self. This narrative, however, reduces the mother to a potentially dangerous murderer who must be symbolically killed if the boy-hero is to survive. "Mutti: Medea. Klytämenstra. Jokaste. Antigone..."(209). Located within these fictional mothers is the male invention of the destructive female whose power must be neutralized via an exercise of male dominance. In destroying the female, the boy symbolically kills the "other." We recall from our prior discussion, however, that the boy is additionally killing off a passive moment of his own psychic constitution that is inconsistent with the equation of masculinity/active.

The process of transformation involves leaving the old construction of self behind and assuming one that more closely approximates the cultural definition. The constructed nature of these definitions is readily apparent in Jäcki's
thoughts:


Johnny no longer exists when he is no longer performed, in much the same way that Detlev ceases to exist when Jäcki rejects the masculine ideology that Detlev had accepted. Keenan says that "'subject' names the time and place, always some sort of present, within which knowledge can be articulated..." (18). As such, Detlev's subjectivity changes according to the narrative he has integrated into his awareness.

The nature of the theater's stage allows for rapid role changes based on whatever story is to be acted out. Detlev's subjectivity is formed in part by Goethe's and Kleist's narratives of male power. Jäcki is, however, reformed by a narrative reversing the dominant ideology, opening up the boundaries of sexual expression or, to paraphrase Dollimore, bringing the marginalized back to where it was once located.

Zwölftes Bild: Revolution in Deutschland. Cartacalo/la verliest einen Aufruf über die Veränderung des Hormonspiegels. Höhepunkt des Schauspiels. Sehr
Detlev's rite of passage produces a type of masculinity consistent with a representation of male as the conquering hero, whereas Jäcki's includes what has been marginalized as perverse. What enables Jäcki to move between social roles without attempting to maintain the notion of a fixed, essential subjectivity is his childhood exposure to multiple interpretations of reality. The text's narrator makes a point of showing the specificity of cultural symbols and their importance to those who choose to imbue these signs with relevant meaning. Detlev is at first completely unaware of the symbols of National Socialism, although we can safely assume he would have been surrounded by them.


It is not until Detlev has joined the Hitler Youth that he is able to attach any importance to the socially significant signs around him.

As soon as he learns to read the social codes in his world, the war ends and the symbols take on
an entirely new meaning as many around Detlev fashion post-war identities that seemingly contradict their former selves.

Sogar Peter Hinrichs Vater, der als Pastor bei den Nazis hoch und höher stieg, ist wieder da. Er stiess Peter Hinrichs Kopf so lange in die volle Badewanne zur Bestrafung, bis er keine Luft mehr bekam. Jetzt reicht der Pastor ein Formular als Opfer des Nationalsozialismus ein und schreibt an Thomas Mann(109).

The roles Detlev sees off stage are as easily discarded as those on stage. Life begins to imitate art, as there is often a simultaneous and sometimes contradictory reality behind the one being portrayed. As the boundaries between truth and illusion blur, Detlev is able to participate in multiple realities ["Ich will Schauspieler werden"(123)] with relative ease.

The contradictions in Detlev's life subvert to some extent the conditioning of his rites of passage. He is praised for his racial purity ["Ein reinarischer Typ, sagt der Betriebsobmann" (63)] although he is aware of his Jewish ancestry. He learns to play the role of the dutiful Hitler youth with as much aplomb as when he plays "Frieden" in Der Trojanische Krieg findet nicht statt. Detlev learns that one's experience
of reality cannot be universalized into a "truth."
What the audience of a play experiences is a truth
at variance with that of the actors.

Vorhang auf! Scheinwerfer drauf! Ameri-
ka, das Land der unbegrenzten Möglic-
keiten. Johnny Sonnyboy sitzt in der
Happy! Glücklich(169).

Detlev, as Johnny Sonnyboy, may experience the
optimistic affluence of a post-war America, but
when he takes off the mask, there is a poor and
hungry boy living among the ruins of Hamburg.

Detlev hat Hunger und Durst. Er
friert...Er steckt sich eine Weintraube
in den Mund. Es ist nur eine Weintrau-
bimitation aus alten Brötchen, blassgrün
angemalt. Detlev isst sie vor Hunger
trotzdem(169).

Detlev does not, however, stay fixed in any
one role.

Die vielen Individualitäten, die ins
Spiel kommen, erweisen sich als bloße
Fassaden, eine schiebt sich vor die
andere...(von Matt:84).

By recognizing that social roles are facades,
Detlev is able to demystify both the characters on
stage and the cultural heroes present in his
society.

Der Tempelherr pupt auf der Bühne...Das
ist furchtbar und zerstört die Illusion.
Auch Lessing hat gepupt. Maria Stuart.
Unser Herr Jesus Christus, der für uns
alle Mensch geworden ist. Ist es
beruhigend oder verboten, so etwas zu denken (112)?

Detlev demonstrates here that when a culture reifies certain figures as icons, it overselects certain facts that are consistent with the ideology it wishes to preserve and leaves out others. What Detlev has done is to break the illusion and reintegrate a moment of ordinary humanity into the construction of these cultural icons. In doing so, he deconstructs these stories and their ability to mediate social behavior.

By extension, Jäcki is able to reformulate what Detlev has integrated into his construction of masculinity and move away from this narrow definition. Before this is further addressed, it will first be necessary to look at masculinity as configured in Detlev's world. It has already been established that rites of passage function to integrate society's ideological constructs into the bodies and minds of its members. We have further determined that Detlev's society constrains the pleasure principle to a single geni
tal/procreative point in order to ensure its longevity. The resultant surplus repression manifests as an ideology of masculinity expressed as violence and domination of others. Before
Detlev internalizes this ideology, his family expresses anxiety about his lack of burgeoning manhood. "Er sollte lieber Räuber und Gendarm spielen und Stukamodelle bauen. Das wird nie ein richtiger Mann" (15).

One who has integrated the culture of war into his body is what presumably constitutes "ein richtiger Mann."

(dort) standen die Abwehrmannschaften, unterstützt von 15- und 16jährigen Luftwaffenhelfern...die junge Mannschaft hatte ihre Pflicht getan bis zur letzten Möglichkeit ihres Einsatzes...und dann--(50).

This passage makes clear what it is to which Detlev is meant to aspire.

The games and rituals of his society produce boys who are willing to surrender their bodies to a violent political system. At the point that Detlev's manhood is being questioned, he has not yet been registered in the Hitler Youth. It is here in this social space where Detlev learns the role of the obedient state's servant and proves his readiness to adopt this role by engaging in the requisite acts of destruction.

Rahmen zertreten. -Heil Hitler(77)!

Detlev has integrated a type of masculinity that sees violent expression as integral to its nature. Ilse Koch, the notorious concentration camp commandant, is referred to as a "Mannsweib"(100), implying something essentially masculine in the concept of violence. Jäcki later says ironically in a discussion about torture, "Foltern, der Sache zuliebe. Nadeln einschlagen. Ich bin endlich ein Mann"(224).

Violence against others and the self is the logical outcome of a boy-initiate who has internalized the tenets of a violent culture. Detlev is learning to overcome the female, "passive" side of his self and categorize his world into those who dominate and those who submit. This mode of thinking cannot help but be the model for Detlev's understanding of sexual expression. Sex that lies outside the narrow confines of procreative heterosexuality, a sexuality designed to produce warriors for the fatherland, must involve a moment of violence to punish one who has transgressed a taboo.

Detlev stellte sich vor, Harald und Dicker kommen und fesseln ihn und berühren sein Pfeiferl unsittlich, nehmen es in den Mund, beissen davon ab, stecken
sich es hinten rein... Denn das wäre doch zu peinlich, wenn Tante Karin (käme) und knipste das Licht an... Dann würde mich Mutti berechtigterweise ins Erziehungshelm stecken - wenn ich nicht gar ins KZ gesickt würde(205).

We can see that Detlev has learned the cultural limits of sexuality. What is viewed as perverse can only be enjoyed if experienced under force. The marginalization of homosexuality is necessary in this version of masculinity, as it represents a "passive" pleasure at odds with the ideology of the dominant warrior-hero.

As we have seen, the stage, is the main "sacred space" where rites of passage are enacted in this novel. The school is another arena where the exigencies of the culture are written into the bodies of the children. Here Detlev learns, once again, about the power of the male over others and the shame one must endure when one ranks among the powerless.

Detlev kann seine Schularbeiten nicht finden. - Wollen wir sie gemeinsam suchen, sagt Dr. Prelle. Detlev muss mit dem Ränzel nach vorn kommen... und Prelle langt in Detlevs Zettel hinein und hebt einen Packen freundlich hoch und lässt ihn herunterflattern, an den Gesichtern der Klassenkameraden vorbei... Die 6A lacht... Es dauert ungefähr eine halbe Unterrichtsstunde und zum Schluss muss Detlev alles wieder einsammeln und wieder in sein Ränzel stopfen. Er darf auf seinen Platz gehen, wo Marion Böge,
obgleich sie ihn immer noch liebt, nicht wagt, ihn anzusehen(168).

The humiliation Detlev endures reveals to him the ideology of forced male dominance in his society. Although he is now in the role of the submissive boy, he has learned the dynamics well enough to know when and with whom he can exercise his male prerogative of dominance over others. The object of this exercise will logically be women since they are conflated with the despised and feared passive role(Kaufman:19).

In his quest to solidify his ego boundaries by separating from his mother, Detlev attempts to exert his dominance over her by experiencing a rite of passage that marks the boundaries of his subjective understanding of women. Detlev had previously idolized his mother. "Die Mutter ist Sonne, Mond und Sterne. Die Mutter ist Glück, die Schönheit..."(114). His reincorporation into the mother's world after the Hitler Youth is marked by imitating one boy's openly hostile aggression to his mother.

Robert gehorcht seiner Mutter nicht. Er nennt sie: Du Alte, du Dicke, du fettes Stück, du bist bekloppt...ich will was zu fressen, du alte Fötze...Detlev fängt an, Robert nachzumachen(114).
Detlev soon realizes, "dass (die Mutter) sich unter seiner Behandlung verwandelt hat" (115). Detlev has internalized the cultural instructions of a group whose purpose it is to turn boys into men and can now conclude that he no longer ranks among the powerless.

As a subject moving away from the liminality of boyhood, Detlev begins increasingly to approximate his culture's definitions of masculinity. Inherent in this definition is culturally sanctioned violence against women, which is made acceptable by its inclusion in society's sacred narratives.

Was macht Volpone?
-Volpone versucht ein Mädchen zu vergewaltigen... Die Marquise von O. wird auch beinahe von einem russischen Besatzungssoldaten vergewaltigt... (135).

Detlev, expecting that these narratives additionally articulate a social role, tries to emulate them in his fantasies.

Detlev sieht einen anderen Detlev im Spiegel... Detlev redet sein Spiegelbild mit der Zigarre zwischen den Beinen an:
-Ich werde Sie jetzt vergewaltigen. Detlev stellt sich vor, die Hand sei ein bewusstloser Frauenkörper... Detlev überlegt, dass er jetzt nicht mehr nur ein Kinderdarsteller ist, sondern dass er die Marquise von O. spielen könnte, er meint, ... den russischen Offizier" (224).
Detlev is aware of his reincorporation into a discourse of power and the availability to him of a position of dominance. We recall that Detlev's earliest experience of his mother was of the woman as protector and nurturer. It wasn't until his stay in the orphanage that Detlev thought to question being bathed by his mother. Detlev's conception of women changes as he integrates his culture's positioning of the relationship between men and women. We see Detlev's passivity change to violent fantasy as he strives to represent himself as an active male member of his society. This discourse of dominance over women runs parallel to the initial experience of his homosexuality.

Detlev moves from an erotic fascination towards men to a rejection of homosexuals consistent with his society's taboo against "perversions."

Er akzeptiert Konventionen wie Naturereignisse. Um in der Erwachsenenwelt leben zu können, muss er sich in deren Wirklichkeit einfügen (Sager: 65).

Before he is aware of the social conventions that map out acceptable expressions of pleasure, Detlev accepts his admiration of the bodies of other men without fear of transgressing a forbidden
boundary.

Detlev sieht den ersten feindlichen Soldaten. Dessen Arsch ist so rund, dass der Stoff der Hose kaum rüberreicht. Am liebsten möchte Detlev zwischen die beiden Hälfiten des englischen Arsches hineinkriechen...Detlev bewundert alle runden Arsche der vorüberstrampelnden Besatzungssoldaten(99).

His experiences in the theater serve, once again, to mark off the boundaries of propriety in regard to what are socially permissible erotic pleasures. Just as the stage is the sacred space where Detlev learns about the male claim to the dominant social position, Detlev also learns here about the taboo of homosexuality.

. Es gibt Männer, die fühlen sich zum gleichen Geschlecht hingezogen.
-Goethe auch?
-Um Himmels Willen!
-Und wo wollen die es hinstechen?
-Es ist verboten und es wird hart bestraft. Und schädlich. Es heisst homosexuell. Wenngleich auch von Patroklos gesagt wird, er sei eine Mannshure und liege bei Achill...
-Das gibt es alles und ich hatte keine Ahnung davon. Homosexuell(136)!

Homosexuality is conceived along the same axis of active/passive that characterizes male/female relationships. In our discussion of homosexuality in Chapter One, we saw that male homosexuality is often conflated with being passive and female, making it a form of pleasure that
must be overcome or repressed. Once Detlev internalizes the taboo against homosexuality, he erects rigid boundaries to protect himself from what he has constructed as perverse.

Der homosexuelle Regisseur schenkt Detlev Bonbons. Detlev wagt nicht die Bonbons, die der alte Mann in seiner Gier vielleicht alle einzeln unsittlich berührt hat, ehe er sie dem gleichgeschlechtlichen Kind schenkte, zu lutschen und schmeisst die Tüte...in den Schnee(150).

It was earlier mentioned that Detlev and Jäcki stand in a dialectical relationship to one another, Detlev's construction of masculinity being the thesis to Jäcki's antithetical moment. The neophyte Detlev has been socially conditioned via the agency of rites of passage enacted in the public space of the Hitler Youth and later the stage. He is transformed from a boy, with a libidinal drive that allows him to appreciate the sensuality of his mother and take homoerotic pleasure in the bodies of English soldiers, into a young man. This identity will change again as he moves into the persona of Jäcki, but this interim character is one who has adopted the constructs of a violent masculine culture.

Jäcki is the antithesis to this construction of violent masculinity. His world, which will be
explored in more depth in *Die Palette*, consists of the most marginalized members of society, prostitutes, pimps, drug dealers and the like. Jäcki is able to break with his previous social conditioning because he no longer feels any connectedness with the past. "Für mich:...Der Geruch der Leichen am Krüppelheim. Der Verlust des Begriffes Dauer" (34). With the break in continuity, Jäcki can reject those constructions that characterized the world of Detlev. The breakdown of Detlev's world and the corresponding "truths" that ordered his world leave Jäcki in a place where the former categories of Detlev's world no longer exert an influence on ordering his experience. They remain, however, as disconcerting memories.

As much as Jäcki, perhaps a composite of young post-war Germans, would like to move beyond the historically specific cultural constructs that contributed to the destruction of his country, he cannot step out of his present chaotic circumstances. As he has integrated many of society's violent ideologies into his psyche, the best he can do is react against these former constructions. As the mythic narratives that helped articulate the boundaries of social experience
disintegrate, Jäcki must find another agency that can organize his reality in a meaningful fashion.

Tatsächlich zerstören die Bomben mit der Kohärenz der Zeit auch die Möglichkeit der Narrativik, die Poetik der Erinnerung und den lexikalischen und syntaktischen Bestand der Sprache (Böhme 177).

Concomitant with the breakdown of social narratives is a disorientation of one's subjectivity. Former, culturally sacred narratives lose their ability to articulate one's subjective understanding of the world. In the process of recovering the subject, the sense of self in this moment of chaos, one has the opportunity to deconstruct the social imperatives that presented themselves as immutable cultural "truths."


Along with Jäcki's Hamburg, the social constructions of what constitutes truth and good are leveled to the ground. The self then is also momentarily lost as it has, up till this point, used these constructions to orient itself in society. Like Detlev's awareness of the gap between Sein and Schein, Jäcki uses the destruction around him as an opportunity to look behind
the curtain of social ideology and reject what is not consistent with his experience.

In moving away from Detlev's world of violent masculinity and the primacy of heterosexuality, Jäcki sees that he has been fundamentally transformed, not society. "Seit der Paragraph [175]¹ aufgehenoben worden ist, verdreifacht die Hamburger Polizei ihre Streifen. Es gibt...keinen Busch, (der) nicht bewacht ist"(39). Although Hitler's government is no longer in power, the ideologies that characterized National Socialist thought are still a presence in post-war Germany.


The narratives defining the structure of this society may not have changed with the change in government, but members, like Jäcki, are now able to select what cultural constructions articulate

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1. What is being referred to here is Paragraph 175 of the German Constitution that made homosexual acts a criminal offense. The definition of this law was broadened under the National Socialists to include homosexual desire and was used to justify the internment and execution of homosexuals in concentration camps.
their experience.

As Jäcki accepts his socially marginalized homosexuality, he decenters the middle-class ideology of monogamous heterosexuality ("Gehen die Ehen kaputt, weil zu viele Partner daran teilnehmen oder zu wenige" (95))? With the decentering of the dominant model of acceptable pleasure, Jäcki is able to explore prostitution as a means of experiencing pleasure without denying the financial proposition underlying most erotic exchange in capitalist society.

Aber wenn du den Stricher so verächtlich findest, dann musst du gleichermassen den Freier verächtlich finden, der den Stricher zum Stricher macht. Wie der Stricher herumläuft, um den Freier zu finden, läuft der Freier tagelang herum, um den Stricher zu finden. Der Freier gibt die gleiche Summe, die der Stricher nimmt. Sie lieben sich um denselben Betrag,... sagt Jäcki (197).

Prostitution is usually associated with the exploitation of a body by another, more powerful body. Under Jäcki's formulation, however, erotic pleasure is merely one more commodity in a market-based society. The fact that the exchange of sexual pleasure is mutual and consensual demonstrates a movement away from the rigidly codified world of Detlev, where sexual pleasure was procured by force on the unconscious bodies of
women. Jäcki, the antithesis to Detlev's social conditioning, is firmly committed to non-violent means of expression:

Ich brauche mich nicht auf die unendlichen Möglichkeiten der Brutalität, sondern nur auf den sehr kleinen Spielraum der Gewaltlosigkeit zu konzentrieren (191).

In the gay bar, Die Palette, the sacred space where Jäcki undergoes another rite of passage, he learns to question the truths of his culture. In doing so he opens up the boundaries of his subjective experience, which results in a redefinition of what comprises the tabooed and perverse. The process of redefining cultural boundaries becomes problematic for Jäcki, as this character represents an intersection of several publicly invented narratives. By giving up some of these constructions, he is, for a time at least, giving up his former subjective understanding of the world and with that, his "self."

Jäcki's present is emptied by the massive destruction of his world so that the integration of his subjectivity with former dominant cultural ideologies no longer gives meaning to his present experience. As Detlev once stood tabula rasa before the orphanage, ready to learn the knowledge
necessary to articulate his present, so now stands Jäcki. Jäcki's liminal state between an old and new social order where his queer desire is reconfigured from perverse to acceptable, ("Ja, eine neue Zeit hat angefangen...Die Neue Realität hat begonnen" (81)) allows him to redefine the erotic boundaries of his subjectivity without acquiescing to society's taboos.

Jäcki becomes one more of Detlev's imitations, another role to be played out in the social field. As opposed to Detlev however, Jäcki articulates a reality that has decentered the ideology of violent masculinity. "Ich werde mich mit einer Theorie der Empfindsamkeit befassen..." (234). As a result of Jäcki's positioning himself outside the dominant discourse, he is able to recover the former homosexual moment of his subjectivity that was among the ruins of Hamburg. This distinguishes him from the larger segment of society that has emptied itself of its memory and complicity in the destruction of Germany. The casualties of the war have been reduced to numbers and clinical descriptions of atrocities.

Der Geruch gebratenen und verbrannten Fleisches und Fettes war meist stark überdeckt von jenem süßlich unangenehmen der faulen Zersetzung tierischen
Gewebes(52).

There is a notable lack of a subject in this novel's narratives of war. This, the dominant discourse, runs against Jäcki's reconfigured subjectivity. In his estimation of the heinous crimes committed against the victims of National Socialism, Jäcki reintroduces a subjective moment making the violence a human, not a statistical event.

Wird niemand mehr an den Hoden aufgehängt? Werden denn in Kuba keine Homosexuellen mehr durch die Strassen geführt? Prügelt man denn keine marokkanischen Kinder mehr...? Wird in Yemen kein Homosexueller mehr aus dem Flugzeug geworfen, zur Strafe(235)?

Jäcki's homosexuality serves as an initiation of the male subject into a non-violent, less restrictive social ideology. In reintroducing a dialectical relationship between the social subject and his/her cultural narratives, Jäcki holds members of society responsible for the effects of their constructions.¹ This is

¹I have mentioned earlier that I am concentrating on one aspect of these texts, namely the construction of masculinity and the characters queer desire. Another study of these texts in which the character's Jewishness is brought to the forefront of the analysis would add an important dimension presently lacking in Fichte criticism. I feel that such a reading of the text would support my
feature that does not serve its propagation, irrespective of how intricately bound this particular is to the initial construction. We have seen this dynamic already in the marginalization of homosexuality as perverse. We see this dynamic again evidenced in our present text by society's massive attempt to forget its complicity in the maintenance of National Socialism. It takes the aftermath of the war to such an objective extreme in order to distance the possibility of individual involvement.

...die (Zeitung)fotos bleiben stehen...Kinderskelette. Ein Haufen von magersten Kinderleichen, die vergasst wurden...Oma (sagt): Vergiss es schnell wieder. Jetzt leben wir in Frieden(101)

The rites of passage that impart a violent expression of masculinity to Detlev also convey the cultural dictate where the "other" is to be dominated with whatever force is necessary. What is made to be the "other," is always constructed out of those features of the self that are inconsistent with the position of powerful male.

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conclusions as both homosexuality and Jewishness were relegated to the farthest margins of National Socialist Germany.
Jäcki's ability to continue subscribing to these social narratives is subverted by witnessing the destructive effects of this violent ideology, by recognizing the illusory nature behind much of socially organized reality, and his exposure to the perverse edges of society. He is able to reformulate his subjective understanding of his world and himself by integrating the formerly marginalized narrative of homosexuality into his story. In breaking down the boundary between self and other, he no longer must take up the position of warrior to keep his "polymorphously perverse" erotic drives repressed. Detlev and Jäcki end in a moment of synthesis, where hope is introduced in the development of the individual subject. We can see that the movement intended by the narrator would be toward a rite of passage that inscribes an ideology of non-violent sexual expression onto the bodies of its social subjects and a reduction in violence against the "other" since one no longer needs to obliterate the "self."
CHAPTER IV

With reference to the already discussed texts, we have examined the socially constructed rituals that mark the boundaries of acceptable masculinity within the dominant discourse. The agents transmitting the social codes range from boys' games to socially sanctioned narratives acted out in the public space of the stage. Fichte's 1968 novel, Die Palette, is linked thematically to the other texts examined in that all three occur in places removed from the customary social environment. The phenomena of removal from a familiar cultural milieu, an initiatory period in a "sacred" space, and subsequent reintegration into a customary social arena is first encountered by Detlev in the orphanage of Das Waisenhaus. In our second text, Detlevs Imitationen "Grünspan", Detlev experiences his society's rites of passages by assimilating the culturally significant narratives in the "sacred" space of the theater. Die Palette continues this theme
of separation from customary social spaces by situating its primary action in the basement gay bar, *die Palette*.

Like the orphanage and the stage, *die Palette* is a place where certain cultural narratives are imparted to Jäcki. As he integrates these narratives into his subjective understanding of the world around him, Jäcki is able to order his experiences and ascribe meaning to them. *Das Waisenhaus* and Detlevs *Imitationen* Grünspan are primarily concerned with examining the rituals operational in the fictional world of Detlev/Jäcki and their agency in the construction of various masculinities. Grünspan also shows how socially sanctioned narratives inform the ideological positions that inform rites of passage.

*Die Palette* differs from the previous texts, as it is concerned less with how social rituals are acted out, than with the social narratives that construct a system of boundaries and limits. There is also a stylistic difference in *Die Palette*, as the text is only loosely diegetic. As opposed to the first two texts, *Die Palette* challenges the reader to piece together the linear progression in the lives of its characters out of a vast array of bar conversations and reflections.
by the narrator. The main character of this text is Jäcki, who we follow from his first visit in die Palette to the bar's closing. The novel's characters consist of an array of people from Hamburg's underworld. They gather together on a regular basis and the stories they tell about their lives become the elements of the plot.

The narratives that are told in die Palette constitute a queer subjective awareness. Although these stories are told in the marginalized space of a gay bar and represent a socially tabooed desire, they still function as discursive strategies for ordering experience. The narratives of queer desire impart to the neophyte members of the social circle the norms and value system that operate in this socially marginalized world. What Jäcki experiences in die Palette constitutes a rite of passage for his subjective understanding of the world is transformed by integrating into his construction of "self" his tabooed homosexual desire.

Up until now, rites of passage have been analyzed as the agency in constructing various ideologies of masculinity. With Die Palette we will reverse the question and attempt to ascertain how various ideologically loaded narratives
reproduce themselves by mediating an appropriate rite of passage. Die Palette consists almost exclusively of stories and characters' reflections. The process of ritualized passage is not depicted in favor of the narratives that clearly reveal their belief system. As Jäcki is a fictional construct, "he" forms the best means through which to examine the subsequent construction of masculinity.

It was previously mentioned that the bar, die Palette, forms the sacred space where Jäcki's initiatory ordeals are enacted. The gay bar takes on mythological significance as it becomes a place where transformation of the neophyte subject occurs. Seybold sees die Palette as "das Asyl der Niedrigen und Erniedrigten" (3194). Even though die Palette is home to some of the most socially marginalized in this slice of Hamburg's underworld, it functions only partly as a refuge from the outside world since it is still subject to police raids and other outside controls. More than simply a place of refuge, die Palette functions as a sacred cave, whose mythological significance is to provide a place for transformation.

In his journals, Mircea Eliade writes of the cave as the concealed center, of the "heaven-cave
which indicates a hidden paradise"(19). Eliade likens Ulysses' journey toward Ithaca in the *Odyssey* as a labyrinthian path toward the center. In keeping with the terms of this dissertation, it can be said that once the center is reached, the formerly tabooed and marginalized are reintegrated into the conscious subjective awareness of the character. This would imply a conception of masculinity that is no longer ordered along the axis of acceptable and perverse that makes homosexuality the antithetical "other" of ideologically correct masculinity. This labyrinthian journey is undertaken by Jäcki, who

must be capable of penetrating the hidden meaning of his wanderings, and of understanding them as a long series of initiation trials and as so many obstacles on the path which brings him back to the hearth (toward the center). That means: seeing signs, hidden meanings, symbols, in the sufferings, the depressions, the dry periods in everyday life(Eliade 19).

The text begins with a description of *die Palette* in relation to its surrounding world. The third-person narrator, who relates Jäcki's stories, provides us with the length of time it takes to reach various points in Hamburg, in Germany and finally, various European cities.

Von der Palette aus erreicht man in einer Viertelstunde den Hauptbahnhof...
in zwei Tagen, Paris...In einer Woche, Saint Tropez...Ausserdem stehen noch Casablanca, Athen, Formentera in einer Beziehung zur Palette(9).

We see that the center of this narrative world is the gay bar, die Palette. The marginalized narratives of homosexual desire this social space encloses will become central to the construction of Jäcki's subjectivity. There is also a secondary effect of centering the dominant social discourse, making the formerly tabooed and perverse acceptable. All of this occurs in a bar that is paradoxically central to the creation of a queer narrative reality but peripheral to the dominant discourse.

To reach this bar's entrance one must walk four steps down, which allows "mythologische Beziehungen zum Hinabsteigen her[zu]stellen"(12). As Jäcki enters the bar for the first time, he thinks to himself, "Ich war nie in den Katakomben"(13). Die Palette is a place hidden from view into which one must descend in order to experience. It becomes a sort of nether-world where the rules that constitute the usual environment are no longer decisive. Not being constantly subject to the controlling gaze of the dominant society, social spaces such as die Palette allow
its inhabitants to transgress socially contrived boundaries, in effect, closing the gap between acceptable and perverse.


Jäcki steps down into a world where he must learn a new set of rules in order to ascribe meaning to the symbols around him. "Es geht um einen Initiationsprozess" (Jens). In doing so he engenders a subjective transformation that is, in a sense, a recapture of what once was. In opening up the boundaries of "acceptable" sexual expression, Jäcki recovers part of his polymorphous perversity that was refashioned to fit the constraints of procreative heterosexuality.

The narrator equates the downward movement into die Palette as a release of memory. "[Liana] versucht sich an etwas zu erinnern. Eine Treppe hinunterzusteigen" (26). Jäcki's descent into die Palette reverses the Platonic notion of the cave as a place of shadows. Located in this Hamburg cave are the remnants of former desires and drives. Die Palette becomes a place where a
forgotten wisdom resides. In this sense, Jäcki's experience of the new is a return to the familiar and once known.


Implied in the words "rites of passage" is the dynamic movement from one state to another. Die Palette then is a center, a cave, into which one enters and from which, after a period of initiation, one re-emerges with a subjectivity that has somehow been transformed. Jäcki's passage through die Palette is marked in the text by chapters describing his first and last visit shortly before the bar is closed. Before Jäcki enters this labyrinthian center, the narrator likens the descent into the bar to the experience of the development of civilization.

Jäcki steigt also ein Dreitausendsechshundertstel der Entwicklung der menschlichen Zivilisation in die Palette rauf und runter. Jäcki steht vor der Palette(12).

Jäcki stands ready before this sacred space of initiation. As he journeys through this narrative labyrinth (Kramberg) he increases his repertoire of
strategies for interpreting the world around him by integrating homosexual desire into his concept of masculinity. His first sexual experience with Jürgen is initially viewed as a reversal of what Jäcki has previously known. "Ein Farbnegativ aus Irmas Dunkelkammer" (57). This reversal of, presumably, heterosexual desire loses its categorical distinctiveness as Jäcki experiences a re-birth or reawakening with Jürgen.

Jürgen lässt sein Hemd durch die Sandgrube flattern. Er küsst Jäcki auf den Mund. 
-So wedekindisch.
-Ich danke dir...
-Ich bin der Frühlingswind. (58).

Jäcki's experience with Jürgen forms part of the transformation of subjectivity that moves Jäcki away from the former, socially conformed Detlev. As Jäcki continues through the labyrinth, the reflections that form the ideological brackets of die Palette eventually lose their marginality. He has internalized the narratives to such an extent that he is no longer mindful of their "otherness."

Kein Kaleidoskop mehr: Jäcki zählt die Stufen nicht mehr beim Hinuntersteigen. Jäcki bemerkt nicht, dass er die Stufen nicht mehr zählt...Er wird erkannt... (88).
The full incorporation of the bar's stories into Jäcki's subjectivity signals a time to move out of the holy grounds of initiation and become reincorporated back into the dominant social environment. Jäcki's ritual passage through the labyrinth of *die Palette* is marked first by his descent into memory, the rediscovery of a marginalized, yet central sexuality, and a final movement out of the bar transformed into a "man."

"Während Jäcki ihn ansieht, fühlt Jäcki, wie Jäcki sich verwandelt in einen Mann..." (269). He has reached the end point of this experience and can learn no more within the confines of *die Palette*. "Die Palette bietet Jäcki keine Überraschungen mehr" (275).

The time Jäcki spends in the domain of *die Palette* prepares him for assuming the future position of an adult, queer male. Jäcki's journey through *die Palette* is consistent with the framework of rites of passage. He leaves a familiar world upon entering the sacred terrain of the Hamburger underworld and eventually emerges from this pseudo-cave having assimilated its narratives of homoerotic desire into his psyche. Let us now look at the bar as a spatially distinct location, which functions as a repository for certain
narratives.

One critic sees the bar as the "Negation der Zeit, Wiederholung der Immergleichen" (Salzinger). I see the first part of Salzinger's estimation as a semantic contradiction since the negation of time would disallow the repetition of anything. The complete negation of time would also place the subject outside the narrativizing power of temporality. Salzinger's notion of repetition is, however, not only consistent with my reading of the text, but helps to explain why a sacred space can function as it does.

Rather than positing the absence or negation of a never-ending temporality, the time sense in die Palette is cyclical. In mythological terms profane time is suspended in favor of sacred time. We spoke earlier of die Palette as a cave or hearth into and through which Jäcki must journey. Jäcki already observes during his first visit that "in der Palette ist immer alles da" (14). He recognizes the bar as a place of continuous presence; a moment of synthesis that has transcended the usual boundaries of time. This is quite different from implying the negation of time. With the suspension of profane time, however, the social constructions dependent on a certain
historicity for their ideological integrity are nullified. Within the confines of this sacred space, Jäcki's and Jürgen's erotic encounter is no longer a taboo transgressing a sexual boundary imposed by a post-fascist social order, but a reclamation of a lost desire. Located within the twists and turns of the cave are the pieces of the former unity of self that has been fractured by the demands of the reality principle. Time within die Palette allows for the discovery of one's transformative potential without the limiting enterprise of having to interpret every experience within the constraints of the present moment. One cannot, however, step completely outside time without losing the narrativizing function of profane time but one can experience time as a less bounded set.

Aus Zeit wird Ewigkeit. Aus Sonne wird Schnee...Luft verdichtet sich zu Wasser. Wasser gefriert zu Eis... Zeit ist also ein flüssiges Schiff(37).

The initiate has the opportunity in a sacred space outside the confines of profane time to effect a change in subjectivity by reexperiencing that
which is always present. Jäcki integrates this conception of time into his work as an art critic allowing him to consider the cyclical possibility of time. "Jäcki formuliert seine Kritik an: Geburtswehen einer neuen Zeit oder Wechseljahrserscheinungen einer alten" (51)? Furthermore, since the pressure of linear temporality is removed, what one has to experience can be more fully encountered as a result of its uninterrupted presence in sacred time. "Die Palette - eine Form voll Krabben in Gelee" (191). Like the shrimp, the narratives in die Palette are suspended for inspection and made more observable because of the intersection of sacred space and time.

As we have already established that the bar is the main agent that transmits certain social codes to the initiate, Jäcki, we can now turn to how socially constructed narratives constitute

1. The notion of the return to an omnipresent state might seem to contradict the concept of a ritualized passage into a new state. This is, however, part of a mythological structure that is addressed by both Mircea Eliade in his Journals and by Joseph Campbell in the following passage: "The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: a separation from the world, a penetration to some source of power, and a life-enhancing return" (Campbell: 35).
subjectivity. Lacan, in one of his 1954 seminars, postulated that subjectivity is the narrativization of an interpretative act. "...{subjectivity}...as an organized system of symbols, aiming to cover the whole of an experience, to animate it, to give it its meaning"(41). Within the framework of this definition the organization of any set of symbols would be conditioned a priori by the ideological constructs the subject brings to the interpretative act. In a text, the characters and their stories act as ideologemes (Bakhtin 333), becoming the object of representation of a particular, ideologically-charged discourse. This discourse in turn provides the epistemological brackets to the organization and subsequent perception of reality, be it fictional or actual. This brings us back to Wildavsky's thesis that ideology selectively determines out of a myriad of possibilities, those elements that validate a certain way of knowing.

There is, as argued by Foucault, always a moment of resistance to the fusion of discourse and power. Narratives of resistance can therefore function as an antithetical moment to the dominant social narratives and reorganize the objects of
representation so as to open up the presumably fixed epistemological limits.

Knowledge, particularly knowledge of the body and its drives, is not a fixed system. What Detlev believed to be true is not validated by Jäcki's experiences. Already by Jäcki's third visit to die Palette, the narrator makes clear the variability of perception.


Both Jäcki and Hans are confronted with the same experience but interpret it differently in light of whatever narrative strategies they employ. These narrative acts then become

...die Wahrheit über sich selbst zu schreiben, über das, was an irrationalen Strebungen, Bedürfnissen, Wünschen in der eigenen Person existiert und vor der Öffentlichkeit verschwiegen und tabuisiert wird(Bekes 90).

The narratives that are told in the sacred space of die Palette show the dialectic between the characters' inner wishes and the occasional rejection of public demands. In this liminal space the rules governing sexual propriety in the dominant society are not held to be valid, breaking the
link between prevailing discourse and power. In the resulting space, a new symbolic organization is assembled that can dismantle the boundaries between acceptable and perverse, the center and the margins. The narratives of Die Palette are hence able to describe multiple subjective positions, whose worth is not evaluated according to how closely they approximate the dominant discourse.

The narratives of die Palette still carry an ideological freight, but constitute a subjectivity decidedly different from the dominant perceptual order. The ABC dictionary put together by the regulars of the bar demonstrates their ideological position by elevating all things sexual as the representatives of the alphabet. "A: Arsch, B; Bummsen, E: Erektion..., H: Homosexuell..., U: Uterus..." (155).

Making sexual desire integral to the symbolic order forges a new narrative outside the usual matrix of sexual taboos and restrictions. The process of naming his desires becomes, for Jäcki, a marker of his ritual passage from Detlev's world into this new one. In a moment where the usually omniscient third person narrator becomes readily transparent, he says:

The succession of these moments marks Jäcki's journey through the labyrinth of die Palette as he sheds the ideologies of his former self and replaces them with those that imbue his experiences with meaning. The stories found in this place of initiation give expression to the homoerotic desires that were either left unnamed in Jäcki's world or signified as evil.

Naming is used by the narrator as a discursive blueprint for Jäcki's initiation. As Jäcki learns the names of the bar regulars and the stories woven into their names, his sexual desires are recodified allowing the inclusion of homosexuality into the ideology of masculinity. The fact that the names of the characters are not the names with which they were "born" indicates a recoding that approximates a changed subjectivity. The notion of any fixed or essential subjectivity is dispelled by the narrator who changes the names of the characters to fit a new perceptual order. "Zwei Jahre lang war Jäcki in Pierrevert und hiess Jacques, weil er Jakob heisst" (10). Jäcki or
Jakob, when he still organized his world according to the works of Lessing and Goethe, was called Detlev. The name Jäcki is, however, relatively neutral in its ability to characterize when compared with the names of some of the other bar regulars.

One of the first people whom Jäcki meets, Fensterputzerkarl, has a name that would seem to position him at the lower rung of both the educational and economic ladder. The narrator, however, problematizes the act of naming by showing that as important as naming is in bringing marginalized desire back into the symbolic order, words still compartmentalize the subject without fully describing them. In the following passage, Fensterputzerkarl is shown to be more than a mere window washer.

_Fensterputzerkarl holt sein Notizbuch aus der Tasche, zeigt es Jäcki, sagt: _Weil es sehr schwierig ist, sich lückenlos zu bilden...Ich schreibe mir wichtige Anregungen in mein Notizbuch, weil es so viel Lesestoff gibt. Allein über den Kommunismus zum Beispiel oder über die englische Literatur...(40)._

The irony in this character's name also problematizes the reductive nature of ideology. The information Fensterputzerkarl's name selects out can lead one to erroneous conclusions about the
constitution of this character. The name is important for the initial signification but must be seen as a mere container for the intersection of multiple narrativized subjectivities.

Jäcki's journey through *die Palette* leads him to conclude that the name of something describes neither the essence nor the totality of a subject.

...versteht Jäcki die Namen nicht genau,...wenn er den Jungen mit dem Regenschirm sieht und versteht, dass er Ramonita genannt wird, begreift er nicht, dass der Spitzname mit dem Mord an einem Hähnchenbratbetriebbesitzer zu tun haben könnte(15).

Naming, however, is not trivialized by the text but rather needs to be understood as the first line or chapter of a story. "Wörter in Wörtern...Bilder in Bildern"(16). The new, sometimes unexpected, names are all part of the "neue Ritualisierungen" that constitutes the narratives of *die Palette* (von Wagenheim 41). In the process of naming and renaming,


Naming, which begins the process of narrativization, functions in *die Palette* to bring
alternate myths into the symbolic order of the initiate. Running through the assemblage of drag queens, prostitutes, pimps, and drug addicts who make up the list of regular Palettiiner is the common thread of a marginalized existence. Their sometimes satirical stories build myths that have the power to transgress the boundaries of the dominant social matrix and expose the constructed nature of the culture's taboos. It is also important to note that except for Jäcki, the characters of die Palette have only a small diegetic function. Since there is no plot in this text to speak of, the various stories must be read as a patchwork of transgressive narratives.

One of the better examples of this is Blume zu Saaron and his deliberations on good and evil. In a chapter written in the subjunctive, Blume zu Saaron becomes the vehicle through whom the narrator poses moral/ethical questions to the reader. Monolithic agencies of "goodness" are juxtaposed with moments of their history without trying to reconcile the two.

Die katholische Kirche wusste, dass die Nazis die Juden umbrachten...Die Kirche hat Leute gefoltert, um ihre Seele zu bessern...
Der Zweck heiligt die Mittel - böse?
Die Mittel heiligen den Zweck - gut (219)?

What is demonstrated here is less a critique of the complicity of the Church in crimes against humanity than the fluidity of the limits imposed by the moral order (Scharan). The construction of good and evil can change to fit the exigencies of a certain ideological position. Blume zu Saaron eventually decides against the good because he feels acting "good" is too easy. It apparently takes more will to assume the counter-cultural position.


In Blume's dialectic of good and evil, the synthesis or higher good is in opting to transgress a limit. ¹ Staying within the boundaries

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¹ I stated my position in the introduction of this work with regards to transgression of all limits. Blume zu Saaron's synthesis represents not a transcendent moment that guarantees the absolute dignity of all human life, but rather the disintegration of values. In this belief system transgression is a simple feat, as no limits exist. "If the absolute is without content, if the
Reimar Renaissancefürstchen, each character takes his/her turn at experiencing a limit. The subsequent narrativization of their transgression delimits the boundaries of the dominant discourse and allows the usually excluded narratives of the "other" also to occupy a place in the central symbolic order of die Palette.

Like the violent weather produced by the mixture of hot and cold air, social violence is the effect of closing the gap between the margins and the center. Foucault sees that all conceptions of otherness are signs of a withdrawal, of an exclusion that is to be understood in political terms, not in metaphysical terms (Boyne 85).

The drag queen/hustler/actor(ress), Cartacalo/la, typifies the political impact of transgressing a cultural boundary. His/her very existence challenges the most fundamental categories of gender that operate in this society. S/he lives dressed as a woman but performs sexually as a man blurring

formal structures of society become impotent, assertive individuals are free to assume power" (Roche 375). Blume’s value system would negate the potential for true liberation and would, instead, encourage the development of political systems that profit from the relativization of social values. In this respect, Blume zu Saaron might be arguing for his own eradication, as homosexual men were among the groups that kept German society from being "pure."
the distinctions between the arbitrary attributes of masculine/feminine. Society's need to banish Cartacalo/la to its margins reveals the fragility of a culture that must exclude parts of itself to maintain its ideological integrity. To ensure the integrity of the dominant discourse, the marginalization of the "other" must be coupled with silence and invisibility. Cartacalo/la breaks this unwritten social contract by being seen ["mit kurzgeschnittenen Haaren und Haut, von der [man] nicht weiss, ist es Männerhaut oder Frauenhaut"(182)] and by having his story told.

Ich sehe, wie Cartacalo/las Eigenheim am Rande der Stadt zwangsgeräumt wird...Dann müssen eben leider letzte-mendes doch mal die Gummiknüpfe herhalten. Das war der letzte Ausweg und in vierzig Meter blutigem Tüll wird Cartacalo/la zum Peterwagen gezogen, zum Ortsamt Stellungen transportiert, in die Ausnützterungszelle gesperrt und ihre/seine Zwangseinweisung - wohin? - muss jetzt in aller Eile betrieben werden, da sein/ihr Zustand keine Einweisung in eine Heilanstalt rechtfertigt(184).

Cartacalo/la traverses a limit so dangerous that s/he must be sequestered in an institution designed to silence threats to the dominant order. His/her name and story are reconstituted in the holy space of die Palette and brought back into
the symbolic universe that informs Jäcki's rite of passage through the bar. Cartacalo/la, "der echte Hexenmeister"(133), in refusing to remain in the closet of silence (Sedgwick:3), embodies the transformative potential of a transgressive narrative. S/he is hence able to occupy both male and female social positions simultaneously and in doing so, undermines the rigidly codified limits of the dominant discourse.

The narratives of Cartacalo/la offer the answer to the question we have asked of each text, namely, how is masculinity constructed and manifested. Cartacalo/la, as a high priest/ess in Jäcki's initiation rite, is privy to an expression of masculinity that was heretofore understood by Jäcki as perversion. Jäcki's journey through the labyrinth of die Palette is also a renarrativization of the stories of his queer desire. He breaks, through experiencing both his and other's stories of queer desire, the socially mandated code of silence that encapsulates his desire in the perverse social margins. By means of these narratives, he is able to reclaim another part of his sexuality.

As Jäcki journeys through die Palette, he is exposed to a variety of social constructions of
masculinity, some violent, some reflecting the desire for an androgynous utopia. Being in a sacred space of initiation does not mean that he encounters an insular, monolithic version of "good" masculinity. The alterity of the narratives in this social space does not immunize them from taking up the same positions as the discourse that has marginalized them in the first place. The narrative of male violence is a low drone that can be heard in most of the narratives of masculinity, both in and outside of die Palette.

One can expect the violence of the state to be evident in its repression of homosexuality, as this has been a recurring motif in each text.

Jürgen führt Jäcki den schmalen Weg entlang, den Abhang vorbei, wo die Polizei Stacheldraht hin und her gespannt hat, um den Analkoitus auf der schiefen Ebene zu erschweren, um den oralen Verkehr zu vereiteln und um die Verfolgung der Abartigkeit zu erleichtern(58).

The police action is especially severe in attempting to prevent the collapse of a "perverse" margin into a socially central public space. The exercise of force as a mechanism of social control cannot help informing the lives of the men who occupy die Palette. The bar, an initiatory space, presumes that the occupants are merely passing
through, and as such, are bringing into the space the constructions that have up until now constituted their subjectivities. Most of the regulars of the bar were children of fascist Germany and carry memories of social violence. In one of the narrator's many digressions, the reader is taken back to the childhood denazification programs in the schools of the *Palettianer*.


The use of violence as a socially acceptable means of control is found mostly in those characters that have positioned themselves at the juncture of male and heterosexual. Of course, the text does not imply a fixed equivalence between a heterosexual male and male violence. There is, however, a predilection toward violence among those who have internalized the dominant ideology's configuration of masculinity. Unless the narrative of socially sanctioned violence becomes problematized and reconstructed, it remains as a cultural "truth" and is understood to be integral for the functioning of the society. Jäcki's initiatory program includes the reframing of
memories and their removal from the natural order of things.

Jäckis Mitleid ist fünfundzwanzig Jahre alt...Mit der Tante, als der Onkel sie schlug. Die beiden sitzen beim Mittagessen. Der Onkel steht auf und geht an den Kleiderschrank und holt seine zweiten Hosenträger heraus und haut die Tante, bis sie Striemen hat...Die arme Tante(158).

The violent narratives of masculinity that Jäcki brings with him to die Palette are those reified by the dominant culture into myths. In the liminal space of the gay bar where the sacred temporality does not make silent potentially transgressive narratives, Jäcki is able to transform his subjectivity to approximate a different version of masculinity. Jäcki silences the narratives of male violence that have superimposed themselves on his subjectivity for so many years.


—Jäcki dachte, wie schwer es ist, einen Vater zu bekommen, der einem etwas beibringt, der einen nicht kastrieren liesse und nicht in der Glocke kaputt-haute, der nicht verlangt, dass man ihm die Uhr aufzieht und der nicht Sturmführer in der Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler war.

Später wollte Jäcki keinen mehr. Von seinem richtigen Vater kannte er kein Bild und den Namen vergoss er immer
wieder (246).

This important passage signals a turning point in Jäcki's subjective constellation. Detlev's all-powerful father, who was so large as to reach up to the heavens, is now perceived as the signifier of all that must be overcome. The father becomes the specter of violent power over the child, reversing the initial rite of passage in which the boy must overcome the mother to forge his burgeoning self-awareness. As a result of this initial act of overcoming the mother, the boy begins employing the narrative strategy of male dominance over all things passive.

In the space of the gay bar, the father is not to be emulated, but rather overcome. His narratives reflecting the violent constriction of all erotic desire to one point of heterosexual procreativity are silenced. Jäcki is able to accomplish this transformation through a conscious decision to do so and without the violence some of the other Palettiemaner must employ in countering former beliefs. The discourse of the mother becomes privileged not only for its generative/transformative potential, but for the absence of violent dualities at its ideologic
center.¹

Ich will es auf mich nehmen, was meine Mutter hat ausstehen müssen von dem grässlichen Mann, der war mein Vater. Oymeln und geymelt werden als Opfergang?...-Nie wieder(115).

From an earlier discussion we saw how naming begins a process of narration that has the potential to deconstruct reified ideologies and give voice to narratives silenced for their transgressive menace. Homosexuality functions in this capacity as the starting point in an agenda of reconstituting a changed subjectivity for Jäcki. The text, however, does not proselytize homosexuality as being superior to any other consensual sexual expression.² Within the

¹ The discourse of the mother that is being privileged is a less than utopic ideology of motherhood predicated on the presence of the mother/father binary. Implicit in this binary is the conflation of mother/father with active(male) and passive(female) gender roles. The role of the father becomes a cultural symbol for power making the discourse of the mother a moment of resistance to patriarchal hegemony. Detlev's mother embodies this ideology to a small extent. She acquiesces to National Socialist power only insofar as it serves her own needs to protect her son.

² The normative aspect of "consensual" can be further extended to include symmetrical relationships as the highest good. By consensual, I mean the willing participation in a sexual act by both parties involved. What I wish to make clear, is that I am in no way advocating the exploitation of the bodies of others, even if it sanctioned by the
consensus of one group. "Consensus" of the dominant group has all too often been invoked to sanction the claim of men to the bodies of women and children.
the story-tellers. The signification of homosexuality begins a discursive strategy that is better able to describe the range of sexual epistemology and ends in a utopic vision of an absence of gender/sexual orientation categories.

Was dieses Buch ausstellt...(ist) die Utopie von der Androgynie, eine union mystica des Geschlechtetauschs, bei dem ein multivalentes Sexualverhalten möglich wird und die natürliche Trennung der Geschlechter... hinfällig werden (Batt 20).

Jäcki's rite of passage through die Palette is a journey where the former narratives of male violence are countered by those transgressive narratives of homosexual desire. His reincorporation back into the customary social space is marked by a moment of synthesis that moves beyond the categorical markers of male/female, and hetero/homosexual. Heidi's (one of the bar's regular patrons) pregnancy and the birth of her child in the manger of die Palette signal the integration, not exclusion, of the many diverse narratives that build the matrix of the symbolic
order in Jäckis's interpretative repertoire.

Heidi's baby symbolizes the overcoming of the binary oppositions necessary for the preservation of this culture's ideologies. In the following passage, the narrator follows the process from fertilization of the egg to Loddl's utopic wish to be half-man and half-woman.

Als es anfängt, ist es nicht. Halb nicht. Doppelt halb nicht. Zweimal nicht die kleinste Form dessen, was es sein wird und was wissen wird: - Das bin ich. Zweimal ein Ganzes andres. Jedes in Verbindung mit dem anderen eine Hälfte. Eine halbe Lollobrigida, was Loddl wünschte(278).

Speculation as to the sex of Heidi's unborn child leads to a discussion of hermaphrodites by the bar regulars. The ensuing discussion blurs the biological distinctiveness between men and women and even the family constellation that manifests from this breakdown of categories.


This impossible tale could be read as a moment of comic naivete were it not for its context within the sacred initiatory space of *die Palette*. Jäckı has moved ritually into this space with the sub
jectives of Detlev still intact. The final passage in Das Waisenhaus pictured Detlev reifying the father and wanting to protect the mother. Detlevs Imitationen "Grünspan" ends with Detlev fantasizing about raping an unconscious countess and playing the Russian officer in Die Marquise von O. In order to construct a masculinity outside this discourse of violent dominance, Jäcki goes through the social ritual of renaming his desires and experiences.

By assimilating some of the narratives present in the initiatory space of the gay bar, Jäcki is able to invert the stories that previously defined his center and margins. With the marginal now central in his symbolic universe, Jäcki is able to reclaim desires lost to the exigencies of the reality principle and in doing so, he moves beyond the binary oppositions that codified his body into a set of acceptable and perverse boundaries.¹ His journey through die Palette is complete as he emerges from this queer

¹It could be argued that without the reality principle one could move beyond all codes that serve to mark the boundaries between individuals. In this scenario, all behaviors would be acceptable including violent crimes. Absolute codes are necessary as they form the basis of ensuring the dignity of the human being.
labyrinth with narrative strategies that are capable of giving voice to the silenced.
CHAPTER V

Hubert Fichte's fourth novel, Versuch über die Pubertät, first published in 1974, differs significantly from the three prior texts, as the Detlev/Jäcki persona is exchanged for a first person narrator. This narrative shift signals an important development in the relationship of the central character to his culture. Up until this point, Detlev/Jäcki's ever-changing subjectivities have been narrated from without. Like the cultural imposition of social narratives onto one's subjective awareness, the third person narrator has been free to construct Detlev/Jäcki's subjectivity according to his own interpretative strategies. In Versuch über die Pubertät, however, the merging of narrator and main character indicates a self-reflexive capacity not previously developed. The "ich" becomes a construction of itself and, with its ability to talk about itself, able to transcend the culturally mediated configurations of both "self" and "other."
All four texts are linked thematically: each depicts movement away from the perceptual ordering of the dominant discourse. Particularly in *Versuch über die Pubertät*, the narrator guides the reader through the process of his own coming out, throughout which he retrieves queer erotic desire from the socially relegated margins and reinstates it as central to his subjective framework. This transformation, like all others, is metaphorically rendered in the text as puberty. Like biological puberty, during which the body transforms into something new, coming out reclaims queer desire and reconfigures the formerly perverse margins of the body making it less contingent upon the constraints of the dominant discourse.

As a metaphor for transformation, puberty is not limited to an age coincident with the appearance of secondary sex characteristics. As is seen in the text, every redefinition of the self is accompanied by a codified ritual that marks and informs the transformation. Puberty is "vielmehr ein lebenslanger Prozess der Reife, eine ständige Suche nach der eigenen Identität" (Nagel). Puberty is also a liminal state in which the subject is,
with respect to his role expectations in the community, in suspended animation. He neither fully belongs to those he has left behind, nor can he fully claim membership in the social grouping that awaits him. Although liminality is a dynamic state in which the initiate is actively assimilating the cultural constructs of the community in which he lives, it is equally, perhaps paradoxically, a period of quiet. The neophyte does not yet have the responsibilities of those initiated and has the time to reflect on the changes that are occurring.

The text narrated in the first person shares this paradoxical moment of liminality with an initiate in a transforming ritual. The self-reflexive act of narration allows the story-teller a moment of quietude in which to take apart, if so desired, those constructions that have intersected to form his story. The reflections by the text's four narrators is what makes up this novel. The text is comprised of the stories of these four people; the narrator, his former lover, Alex, his friend, Hans Eppendorfer and Rolf Schwab, the elderly friend of the main narrator. The four of them tell each other the stories of their
as it relates to their coming to terms with their homosexuality. In the process the reader is able to contrast how homosexuality was constructed in National Socialist Germany and post-war Germany.

As fictionalized autobiography, Versuch Über die Pubertät, is a form of narrative autopsy that functions to expose the stories that lie hidden in the narrator's body. As the narrator observes an autopsy, he thinks to himself:

Teil um Teil fällt jedes Organ, das ich mir in Halbträumen einverleibt hatte zu dem rituellen Körper meines sinnlichen Bewusstseins, wieder ab und heraus(22).

The self-reflexive act of writing one's own story involves an autopsy-like examination of the multiple narratives that constitute one's identity. The text begins in a Brazilian forensic clinic in which a body is being autopsied. The systematic examination of the corpse is mirrored in the way the narrator dissects the narratives woven in and around his queer identity.

Die Autopsie ist allegorisch zu verstehen als Öffnung, als Augenscheinnahme, als Zergliederung des Erinnerungsbildes...(Böhme 205).
The first person narration is more than just an opening into the narrator's memory. It is also a way of countering the discourse that has made his queerness unspeakable. "Ja, insoweit als man ja immer das Bedürfnis hat, sich auszusprechen" (139). The self-reflexive act gives voice to what has been silenced in the body of the narrator. The act of narrating oneself becomes a transformative ritual, a pubertal experience of sorts. We recall from Die Palette how certain narratives functioned in the rituals that construct a queer masculinity. There is no difference here except that a third person is not reincorporating the discourse of another. The narrator simultaneously experiences his own constructions by telling his own story.

Wir holen unser lebendiges Schweigen
mit diesen Gesprächen ein und entrücken
die Stadt hinter Schleier von Wörtern.
Wir fressen nicht, verzweifelt vor dem

1. Böhme, Nagel and others have argued convincingly that this text is less fictionalized autobiography than Hubert Fichte's autobiographical Roman à Clef. Hartmut Böhme offers a compelling reading of Versuch über die Pubertät based on the textual links to the life of the author. For my purpose however, I am less interested in the life of Hubert Fichte and attempt to show how this text elucidates a cultural process.
 Schweigen des anderen, die Stadt in uns hinein, sondern schieben die Dinge, Plätze, Fahnen vor uns zusammen, überwerfen Hamburg mit Wörtern(143).

Just as rites of passage are the agency of ideological constructs, language is the agency of rites of passage. Depending on one's intent, language, as a transformative tool, can be used to open up one's subjective understanding or to marginalize aspects of it. The narrator sees the signifying process as

ein bewegter Ritus, der nicht von Maschinen abhängt, sondern von Lippen...hangelnd in dem dreidimensionalen Labyrinth aus nichts als Sprache(208).

Language is the medium that transforms silence into a discourse that in turn constitutes the interpretative world of the social subject. As Dollimore points out, narrating one's queerness is a "reverse discourse" that returns one to a polymorphous perversity lost through the exigencies of a patriarchal reality principle. The narrator's homosexual masculinity becomes an acceptable reality that is not ordered along a diminishing hierarchy of good/bad.

Ich okuliere durch meine Erzählung Realität; durch Mitteilung entsteht keine Verminderung der Bilder, sondern eine Verdoppelung(17).
The twofold effect of doubling the narrator's stories is that he both creates the boundaries of his reality and concurrently recovers these stories from the memory of his former polymorphous perversity. The narrator's creation of a certain reality in also doubled in that he creates one for the receiver of his story. The story of the narrator's queerness is then a communicative strategy that relates a certain experience and becomes part of Dollimore's reverse discourse. The four narratives of this text work together like a rite of passage to transform the perverse silences of homosexuality into a discourse central to the narrator's world view.

Language is the agency that constitutes this rebirth of desire. The state of consciousness that precedes rebirth is represented in the text as death. Death becomes a leitmotif that does not signal an endpoint, but, like puberty, marks the beginning of a transformation. Even though death might be the result of a destructive ideological power play, there remains the potential for transformation in the aftermath of death. In the following passage the narrator shows how even the symbol of the SS, the skull and crossbones, can be
redrawn to change it from a sign of forced repression into one with creative potential.

An den Häuserwänden Totenköpfe. Das Himmler'sche Symbol ist aufgedunsen unter der Asche - der Totenkopf als ein extremitätlosen Frauenrumpf, die Brüste sind die leergefressenen Augen, der Nabel die entknorpelte Nasenöffnung, die Fotze ist der abgelippte Knochenmund, und darunter kreuzen sich...zwei riesige Liebeschöckchen...(145).

Rising out of the ashes of surplus repressed desire are female sex organs demonstrating quite clearly the tenacious presence of unmediated erotic desire in spite of the most profound social controls. The phoenix-like transformation of desire from the destructive to the sexual links death with rites of passage. Death becomes, metaphorically, a liminal state through which an initiate must pass before any transformation is complete. The narrator alludes to the transgressive liminality of death as he watches an autopsy being performed.

In Haiti erwürgt man die Toten aus Mitleid noch einmal oder sticht ihnen mit einer Nadel durch die Schläfe; denn die Scheintoten...müßen die Gräber wieder verlassen...(16).

Death is a liminal state that possesses a frightening transgressive potential in that the rules governing dominant society's interpretative
organization are voided. The cultural exigencies that operate to maintain the dominant discourse fail to find a counterpart in the nether-world. Far from being a place of absence, however, this world allows the initiate the space to extend his interpretative repertoire. Inhabiting the world of the dead, even temporarily, provides exposure to the body's unmediated narratives and their subsequent assimilation.

Erziehung. Identifikation. Mitleid mit der Leiche - dem Gleichnam...Identifika-
tionen unmöglich machen. Selbstken-
ntnis verhindern. Das heisst Versklav-
ung(21).

Free from the restricted, over-selective perceptual order of the living, the dead are privy to knowledge that is banished to the margins of social existence by the patriarchal reality prin-
ciple.

Man hat ihnen handgeschriebene Zettel mit Bindfaden am Handgelenk befestigt. Einer der Trauergäste erklärt, was er nicht weiss, und bewegt die Tücher an den Toten, (und) hebt weg...(13).

The metaphor of death is used to locate one in a transitional space where memories can be called back into life. There is also a moment in this metaphoric cycle of death/rebirth where the con-
structs that comprise the self are
exinguished. The self is renewed and, in our present text, made ready for the reintegration of a queer discourse into its construction of masculinity.

Death, be it actual or metaphoric, does not occur without the destruction of the former. The ritualistic annihilation of the self is often an ecstatic/erotic moment where the initiate willfully undergoes a seemingly violent body ritual with the anticipation of a rebirth. Like the anatomy scenes that open the text ["Vivisektion und Wiedergeburt" (Böhme 202)], the narrator shows an aesthetic propensity for Antonin Artaud's "Theater of Cruelty."

Die Gesellschaft muss zerstört werden durch das Theater und durch das Maschinengewehr...Leben ist immer der Tod eines anderen...In der Grausamkeit bilden sich die Pläne der Schöpfung ab(97).

It could perhaps be argued that the narrator's predilection for physical cruelty is but the outcome of a masculinity constructed around the axis of active/passive. In these body rituals the neophyte is both active and passive at once. The seeming violence of the ritualistic acts is ultimately an agent that reflects empowerment: The narrator moves from Hölderlin's "die müßige Zeit
der Tragödie"(97) to "die schwarze Zeit der Tragödie"(97), playing with the dialectic of black/white; death/rebirth.

Death, or the disintegration of the self, cannot be construed in this text as entering an empty and formless void, but as the precursor to a new freedom. In redefining the queer male body, the narrator moves away from the determinate and dualistic genitality of heterosexuality to a polymorphous eroticism that is not fractured. This unity, beyond the binaries of profane existence, dissolves the boundaries of the body and becomes a moment of ecstatic rapture. The story narrated by Hans Eppendorfer of his coming out contains one such moment. His initiatory ritual takes place in an orgy room of a Hamburger leather bar where the death of his self is sexual ecstasy.

...dass in der Anonymität der Nacht, die Körper ihre Gesichter verloren und einfach nur noch Körper waren, Gesäss, Genital, Hand, Fuss, Atem, Pulsschlag. Sonst nichts...Man gab sich einfach nur noch hin, man lieferte sich nur noch aus, die Konventionsschranken waren einfach zerbrochen...Man war wie in einem Ei...Diese Vorliebe für den Schmutz der Erniedrigung...des sich selbst Ausradierens...nur noch Körper zu sein(254).

Like the ecstatic rapture of a medieval saint, Hans Eppendorfer gives himself over to a
liminality in which he is able to reconstruct himself and give voice to the silence of his homosexuality. Death, as a transformative metaphor for social liminality, deconstructs the conflation of life/death with natural/unnatural
(Case 3) Death becomes an affirmative model for the liminal social space that allows for reflection and rebirth of the self.

Denn ich interessiere mich nicht touristisch für die Toten, sondern für das Auseinanderfallen des Bildes, das mich ausmacht (19).

The suicide attempt of Alex, the forty year-old lover of the narrator as a teenage boy, is also equated with rebirth into a new age. Here we should recall Mircea Eliade's discussion of the hero's journey through the labyrinth and eventual return to the center. Alex's suicide attempt can too be seen as a ritualized journey, during which he figuratively destroys the narratives of powerlessness that have brought him to the point of death.

Du wirst wie wiedergeboren.
Du hast gelernt, im Urwald allein ein Jahr zu überleben.
...das Blut rinnt über deinen Körper wie aus dem Mutterkuchen, den Gebärmutterrosen.
Du musst sagen:
-Ich töte meine Mutter.
Du musst jetzt gehen lernen.
Du musst lernen, 41 zu werden (189).

Alex's description of his recovery from his suicide attempt is initially disturbing since one can equate killing off the mother as the Freudian wish of the male to overcome his "female" passivity. In this passage, however, Alex is speaking of his rebirth and, with the requisite presence of blood, is able to effect a reconstruction of his self. In killing off his mother, he is slaying what constituted the world of his first birth.¹

As a child, a powerless social subject, he was not in a position to select from the menu of possible interpretative strategies, those that fit his sense of self. In this process of rebirth, of returning to the center, he must first extinguish the former narratives that constituted the matrix of his self and emerge

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¹ Theweleit would read "killing the mother" as an act of violence specifically against the sexual/creative potential of the mother. "Sind nur tote Mütter gute Mütter? Worauf zielt die Aggression der Söhne? Auf zweierlei: den Müttern die Männer zu nehmen und den Müttern die Lebendigkeit zu nehmen, die Wärme des menschlichen Leidens, wenn Unglück sie trifft. Sie werden männerlos und kalt gemacht" (Theweleit 113). I do not find Theweleit's conclusions in "killing the mother" supported by this text and will maintain that Alex's wishes are symbolic fantasies concerning a rebirth into a new subjective awareness.
with new, queer ones. "Killing the mother" symbolically accomplishes this and additionally realigns the Oedipal triangle so the newly reborn boy is free to experience the father as a sexual object.

However, the incest taboo remains operational, preventing the consummation of this reconfigured drive. What it signals is the reemergence of male-male desire and marks the readiness of the initiate to enter the liminal night world of the dead to construct a queer self.

Alex bedeutet die Nacht.
Wir treffen uns meistens im Dunkeln.
Die späten Zeiten am Rande des Schlafs.
Manchmal das unnützliche Morgengrüßen
der gesundheitsschädlichen Sommernächte (143).

The queer transformations that *Versuch über die Pubertät* depicts cannot occur proximate to a social configuration brought about by the dominant discourse. If such a transformation were to take place within an institution whose primary function is to maintain the integrity of its ideological position, the fragile balance between acceptable and perverse would be disrupted. Queer discourse therefore occupies the so-called realm of the "unnatural." Sue-Ellen Case argues, however, that queer discourse challenges this ontologi-
cal positioning of queer as "unnatural" and subverts the equation of same-sex desire with an unnatural evil.

The Platonic construction of a life/death binary opposition at the base, with its attendant gender opposition above, is subverted by queer desire...Life/death becomes the binary of the "natural" limits of Being: the organic is the natural. In contrast, the queer has been historically constituted as unnatural. Queer desire, as unnatural, breaks with this life/death binary of Being through same-sex desire. The articulation of queer desire also breaks with the discourse that claims mimetically to represent that "natural" world, by subverting its tropes (Case 3).

The consignment of Alex's erotic desire to the dark world of the night becomes less a feature of the social marginalization of the queer than a positioning of homoerotic desire in the cycle of death/rebirth. This hidden, liminal space, much like the gay bar provides to the queer social subject an initiatory foundation with which to break with society's configuration of him/herself. Death is not a loathsome state of non-production but a transitional space into a new queer way of being.

This version of masculinity contrasts sharply with how masculinity is practiced in the dominant society. As has been demonstrated in the
first three texts, "proper" masculinity calls for the exercise of power over all things categorized as either weak or passive. Woven through the four autobiographies in Versuch über die Pubertät are encounters with a brutal masculinity that eventually becomes an agent in the redefinition of what constitutes perversity. From these experiences emanates the counterpoint to the narrator's emerging queer identity. The narrator relates in one story, how he was, as a child, beaten by a teacher for reasons unknown to the narrator.

Mir haben sie auf die Hände geschlagen mit dem Rohrstock, dass die Haut platzte und der Turnlehrer nahm sein Schlüsselbund und hielt es drohend beim Aufschwung in den Nacken (55).

Male violence against children is mirrored in the society in which the narrator lives, only in this passage the violence is directed against queer men.

...sondern eben nur von intoleranten Menschen, insbesondere also älteren Frauen, die sich also bis zu der Äußerung versteigen: Sowas hätte man...Sowas hätte Hitler schnell noch vergasen sollen (125)!

As part of the narrator's autobiographical autopsy, he dissects out those stories inscribed not only in the dominant cultural discourse but integrated into his own subjectivity. It is these
narratives that are "killed" in order to allow for a reemergence of a story of queer desire acceptable to this narrating subject. The narrator's telling these stories of social marginalization also ironizes the acceptable violence of the dominant configuration of masculinity. The main narrator, Alex, Hans, and Rolf all tell a similar story of their initial confrontation with their homosexuality as something "sick." This is consistent with how ideology operates in that anything not selected for inclusion into the "natural order" must be made taboo to maintain its separateness.

The narrator relates that when he was a teenage boy, his sexuality was pronounced as "diseased" by a discourse of medical authority that is a thinly veiled agency for social control.

Pozzi hat meine Hormone in der Schweiz auszählen lassen und sagt: Du bist fifty-fifty! Fifty androgen und fifty östrogen... Fiftyfifty - das heisst homosexuell... Bumms! Schwul!... Tabu! Terrorangriff! Atombombe! Fiftyfifty! Eine Tunte(35)!

The narrating "ich" is configured initially as less than one hundred percent "male" based on an insidious hormone theory of Pozzi, the narrator's mentor and lover. In a society where
acceptable masculinity is built around concepts of domination and power it is logical that one lacking the necessary building blocks of power would be seen as inferior, in this case as homosexual. Homosexuality, made into a disease by blood and urine tests, becomes something that can be "treated" through marriage and exposure to women. Both Rolf and Alex experience this as one of the first important stories of the development of their queer identities.

Ich bin praktisch geheiratet worden... Das stachelte [meine Frau] aber noch mehr an und auf, mich zu heiraten, um mich zu heilen. Und sie hat mich auch, auf ihre Kosten, zu einem Psychiater gebracht...Nach sieben Sitzungen habe ich es als lächerlich empfunden(125).

Both Rolf and Alex attempt to conform to a discourse of male normalcy by renouncing their tabooed homosexual desire in favor of an acceptable heterosexual union. As expected, these unions are short lived since the story of heterosexual normalcy is deconstructed by their still present homoerotic desires. The stories the four characters tell of the development of their queer desire further act as a form of rebirth by narrativizing the former silences of their sexuality. Story-telling becomes a rite of passage that marks
the boundaries of a previously configured "self" and allows the story-teller the opportunity to rewrite the script of his life. "Schreiben ist Vivisektion des Ich" (Böhme 191).

Hans Eppendorfer's story articulates what is only implied in the stories of Rolf and Alex, namely, that the ecstatic moment marking one's rebirth is preceded by a sacrificial act. Alex's suicide attempt and the charade of Rolf's marriage can be read as subtle acts of sacrifice that harbinger a rebirth. With Hans, however, the sacrificial rituals that mark his passage into something new are viewed as sacred rites. "Die Opferung ist ein sakraler Akt" (259). His coming-out is an unabashed sexual celebration of the male body and a giving himself over to an erotic drive that is unmediated by the dominant discourse.

Das schwule coming-out wird dadurch zu einer archaischen, Tod und Eros, Opfer und Preisgabe zusammenschmelzenden Einweihung verwandelt (Böhme 204).

His erotic consecration takes place in the dark recesses of a Hamburg leather club. Leather provides the initiates with a powerful, animal-like covering ("diese Pantherillusion" (257)) that momentarily transports one out of the demands of the reality principle. And as with "das Baden mit
dem Blut im Totenritual von Joãozinho" (Böhme 217),
(an Afro-Brazilian deity), the participants in
this queer initiation ritual experience the trans-
gressive flowing of blood.

Aber ich glaube, dass Urin die Vorstufe
von Blut sein kann...aber ich weiss,
dass Blut, frisches dampfendes Blut eine
ungeheure Faszination hat, von Leben,
von Leib, von Erde, von Ewigkeit, eine
Form von zerfliessendem Körper (258).

The body, which, heretofore, has been col-
onized by the exigencies of a civilizing dis-
course, is freed of these constraints. Blood,
which is seen as the symbol of life, is allowed to
flow in the service of pleasure affirming the
continued life of queer desire. The flowing of
blood also dissolves the binary inside/outside and
consequently the body's margins, previously fixed
by a discourse of heterosexual primacy. Hans, the
initiate, is able, through the ritual destruction
of former narratives, to come out and be reborn
into a new self.

Wenn du deine Adern öffnen lässt, und
das Blut über den Tisch, über den Opfer-
stein fliesst, ist es eine Art von
verströmender Kraft, es ist eine Art von
Sakralem Akt...Es ist eine Art von
Ekstase...Es ist einfach Auseinanderset-
zung mit Leben an sich (260).
For Hans, the act of coming-out is a redefinition of self that is not based on a discourse of taboos and perversity. Hans is free to open the margins of his body and in doing so is able to transgress the former boundaries and reclaim a polymorphous desire that was once his. By telling the story of his coming-out, Hans is further able to fix the events in his subjectivity and incorporate a discourse of queer desire into his interpretive strategy.

One must be careful in reading the story of Hans's leather sex rituals to avoid the pitfall of seeing this as another example of male violence. The masculinity practiced in the queer world of Hamburg's leather bars is not the same as that practiced by the teacher who beat the narrator until his hands bled. The teacher is acting out the societal prerogative that gives him power over the bodies of others. Hans and his fellow initiates are, however, willfully giving themselves over to a process of death and rebirth through the agency of an eroticized ritual.

We see that the four characters of *Versuch über die Pubertät* have, by narrativizing their
experiences, reconstructed their subjectivities. They have transformed themselves by entering a metaphoric puberty, a liminal world where the old rules no longer apply. By undergoing a ritualistic death, they have affected a rebirth outside the limiting discourse that constricted their sexuality to a singular expression. The self, though, that emerges from this transformative ritual remains problematic for the narrator. Is the "self" an essential entity or purely a construction?

Bin ich so veränderbar, beeinflussbar, auswechselbar oder sind diese Veränderungen, Beeinflussungen, Auswechselungen in mir angelegt und also ein Zeichen von Treue(50)?

The narrator moves through this tricky dialectic and concludes that there is a unifying moment in which one can transcend the social narratives and reflect on that part of the self unmediated by culture. This is not to intimate a uniformity of Being or a sameness that erases all distinctiveness between subjectivities. What the narrator moves toward is rather a unified conglomeration of many subjectivities or interpretative strategies.
Hubert Fichte envisioned "eine totale Welt" (253) that would be partially reflected in the one great book he was writing. This book, though, consisted of many components, each one of equal importance. Hubert Fichte's wish for a synthesis that would elevate all discourse, queer or not, to the same level of importance is evident in all of his writings.

Was Fichte hier an seinen zentralen erotisch Signifikanten Hände, Borke, Haut, Baum, Schwärze entwickelt, ist eine andere Ordnung des Seins, zweifellos jenseits der Rationalität; eine Ordnung, die die Dinge und Wesen, insofern sie Leben sind, zur erotischen Form erklärt. Und erotische Form ist nicht Formgeschlossenheit, sondern ekstatische Form, d.h. Form des Über-sich-hinaus-im-anderen-Sein. Dieses Sein ist alles andere als homogen, sondern eine Vielgestaltige Mischung des Ungleichartigen, Symbiose des Verschiedenen (Böhme 253).

This utopic state of Being, although unattainable, indicates the central role that the experience of sexual ecstasy plays in the process of the text's four character's transcending the social constructions that define the "ich." The narrator's way out of this dialectic muddle is to see the "ich" as intersection of multiple social constructions ("nenn dich 'Roman'" (37)). With the self-reflexive act of autobiographical narration,
however, the narrated "ich" becomes extraneous to
the narrating self. This self-reflexivity allows
one to perform an autopsy on one's stories and,
consistent with the theme of death/rebirth, dis-
card those narratives that do not articulate the
full margins the self has come to know.

The "ich" is understood by the narrator as
the part of the self that is formed and functions
in the public domain. It is a mirror of its
surrounding world.

Ich identifiziere mich mit der Welt. Die
Welt ist ich...Ich bin die Welt...so
imitieren, dass ich bin, was ich imi-
tiere...(65).

The self's "ich" becomes a product of what is
inscribed into it by the agency of rites of pas-
sage. As we have seen in this text, there are
narratives that function in the agency of power
for the purpose of social control. The narrative
of heterosexual primacy and its attendant rituals
are but one example. The self, though, can par-
ticipate in other rituals that symbolically place
the subject in a liminal death state that allows
for the reincorporation of divergent narratives.
The implication is that there is a part of the
self that is separate from the network of con-
structions that comprise a particular social
"ich."

Und wenn es wirklich ein Bewusstsein von sich selbst gibt? Wenn ich wirklich mehr bin als ein Räderwerk von Papperlappapp, das sich einklappert, in mir transzendent der Schleim, in mir denkt die Schöpfung über sich selbst nach(64)?

The self-reflexive capacity of the narrator is what allows him to deconstruct the social narratives in place in his life. Like the child going through puberty, he transforms himself through new narratives. Self-reflexivity also implies a moment of synthesis beyond the dualities imposed upon the self by a patriarchal reality principle. The same-sex desire of all four narrators becomes something that possesses an ontological neutrality. It becomes constructed as a perverse evil by a discourse that must ensure its own continued ability to produce and consume. Homoerotic desire then becomes reconstructed by a resistive queer discourse that attempts to bring back to the center its silenced margins.

There is a third moment, however, that was earlier alluded to, namely, same-sex desire as an omnipresent drive. This queer utopia does not need to define itself against a dominant discourse that renders it perverse. It is merely part of an
eternal cycle of birth/death/rebirth and in this transcendental moment becomes part of the sacred fabric of life. This sacredness is seen in a story the narrator tells from his boyhood in which he has sex with his friend, Klaus, between two mirrors.

Der rechte Spiegel spiegelt uns beide und der linke Spiegel spiegelt uns beide und spiegelt die Spiegelung des rechten Spiegels und der rechte Spiegel die des linken und seine eigenen im linken und stünden die Spiegel vollkommen parallel und beschränkte die Lichtgeschwindigkeit nicht das Projizieren der Spiegelbilder, wäre unser Weggehen zwischen den Spiegeln ein anschauliches Zeichen der Ewigkeit(93).

The two boys having sex, enjoying each other's bodies unmediated by cultural imperatives that superimpose interpretations of their behavior onto their subjectivities is part of this transcendental magic of life.

We recall from our first discussion of rites of passage that the transformative process begins with the separation from the usual environment and proceeds to a liminal, sacred ground. It is here in this sacred space where the old is dispensed with and new strategies for interpreting the world are learned. The final step in this process is the reintegration back into the usual and away from
the liminal space where the subject had the opportunity to reconnect with his own magic. The usual world though lacks this magic, this moment of transcendence where one is not captive to the constructions that mediate one's experience in the world. The last line of the text reflects the narrator's reluctance to leave the sacred space of this queer utopia.

Der Zauber ist zerschnitten...Ich lebe weiter in einer ganz säkularisierten Welt (298).

The narrator's reemergence from the world of his puberty, from the narrative liminality, is not marked by joy at being able to enter the adult world of privilege but by a sadness at having to live in a world unaware of its own perversity.

Fichtes Schmerz ist der Schmerz über ein Leben ohne Magie, ohne Mythen, ohne Transzendenz, der Schmerz über ein schales Leben, das nicht genügt (Jost).

The secular world of the narrator is a world constructed around the exigencies of a patriarchal reality principle in a late capitalist society and, as such, contains only narratives that can be utilized as a force of production. The narrator, along with Rolf, Alex, and Hans, has left this world in order to be "reborn" into a world where their desires were not at odds with cultural
demands on their bodies. Through the self-reflexive act of autobiography and in the sacred space of gay bars, they are able to experience the magic of their queer selves and transform their subjectivities. The narrator emerges from this pubertal state with an appreciation of himself as separate from the various constructions with which he must contend. He also experiences the pain at having to leave this utopic space and reenter the profane world where he must wear the label of perversity.
CONCLUSION

This dissertation has addressed a wide range of issues that impact on the construction of masculinity, in particular, queer masculinity. The main theoretical points I wish to comment on here involve the situation of homosexuality in a discourse free from the hegemonic positioning of heterosexual primacy. It was established in Chapter One that sexual expression becomes constricted to a single acceptable point of procreativity in the dominant belief system found in contemporary Western society. This is a result of the exigencies of the reality principle reformulating the pleasure principle to ensure continuity of species. This in itself is not something that can be seen in a negative light, as the transformation of pleasure into work is necessary for survival.

The constriction of acceptable sexual expression and the construction of a matrix of
social taboos designed to marginalize segments of the population does become problematic when: 1) the assumption of heterosexual primacy is used to silence the discourse of those whose experience is not articulated by the discourse of heterosexuality and 2) when the ideological impact of a hegemonic discourse is used to support legalized oppression or worse, socially sanctioned pogroms against homosexuals.

In looking at how ideological constructs are formed, we have seen that, although there exists a set of absolute values, such as the dignity of the human being, social belief systems are usually informed by arbitrarily fashioned constructs. The result is that the social consciousness of an individual member usually interprets his/her world based on the dominant interpretative framework. Unless challenged, the social subject will tend to see in the world sets of binary opposites, where all that s/he does not subscribe to is viewed as the "other."

One means by which a society inculcates its belief systems is through rites of passage. Processes are ritualized so that they become an
institutionalized part of the social fabric. Rites of passage function effectively in providing an interpretative framework that serves both the dominant and marginalized discourses. This has been demonstrated in my analysis of Die Palette. It was shown that queer desire informs a discourse that in turn produces its own rites of passage.

All rites of passage take place in an initiatory space removed from the customary environment of the social subject. This separation from the usual, initiation, and subsequent reintegration back into the customary social space is the structural link between Das Waisenhaus, Detlevs Imitationen Grünspan, and Die Palette.

The character, Detlev, is first encountered in Das Waisenhaus as a eight year-old in an orphanage. In this space, Detlev experiences the rules and beliefs that inform the boys' practice of masculinity. He learns that being male allows one the prerogative of being violent and integral to the "male" order of things is an ordering of experience along the axes of forced domination/submission. Although Detlev
does not fully adopt the dictates of this violently configured version of masculinity, he nonetheless leaves the orphanage with the notion that by mimicking the actions of the all-powerful father, he too can assume the role of the dominant male and protector of his mother.

Detlev leaves the orphanage and eventually encounters the initiatory space of the theatrical stage in Detlevs Imitationen Grünspan. It is here where Detlev learns the social taboos surrounding homosexual desire, a desire that he is beginning to experience as he reaches biologic puberty. The story of Detlev's rejection of homosexuality and the adoption of a violently exercised practice of masculinity is juxtaposed with stories of Jäcki, the adult persona of the boy, Detlev. By the time Detlev has become Jäcki he has reformulated his understanding of queer desire from its initial perverse configuration to one of acceptability.

The reasons for the transformation are evident in the third text, Die Palette. It is here, in the space of this Hamburg gay bar, where Jäcki is initiated into a queer
sensibility. By doing so, he is able to shed the vestiges of the violently configured masculinity he embraced as a child. Jäcki's reexperiencing of his "polymorphous perversity" allows him to redefine his world based on a less restrictive ideological framework. This loosening of the rigidly codified social matrix that informed Das Waisenhaus, and to a lesser extent, Detlevs Imitationen Grünspan, is reflected in the aesthetic aspects of Die Palette.

The narrative structure does not follow the typical linear progression of events but is instead, a mosaic of bar conversations on a wide array of topics. Through the ruminations of the bar regulars we are able to see the emergence of a queer discourse counter to the dominant one. Dollimore's assertion that the narration of homosexuality is a "reverse" discourse that returns the marginalized to the center of the queer subjects interpretative universe is evident in Die Palette.

The fourth text, Versuch über die Pubertät, continues the theme of integrating queer desire into one's subjective awareness.
Instead of using a sacred space to effect a transformed subjectivity, the text offers the reader the self-reflexive act of autobiography as the vehicle for change. *Versuch* is four men's stories of their coming-out and the realignment of their interpretative strategies along queer lines. As they tell the stories of their lives, the characters create their own rites of passage. The self-reflexive act provides the characters the opportunity to reassess the previous events of their lives and open up the narrative space to give voice to what was silenced. By narrating the silences of their past, the characters are also contributing to Dollimore's reverse discourse by bringing homosexuality back to this narrative world's center.

The over-arching position that informs both the texts and my reading of the texts, is the assertion that homosexual desire is a moment of the human psyche. This moment becomes repressed and subsequently tabooed to ensure its location outside of the dominant discourse. What I hope to integrate into this dissertation, as I work to make this a
publishable manuscript is a discussion of Jungian archetypes that form the memory of our past. I believe that our highly technological and splintered existence prevents us from clearly seeing the cyclical events of our lives. I believe that Fichte's texts would lend themselves well to an exploration of the mythological aspects of rites of passage and formation of a "self". Hubert Fichte was fascinated by other cultures and endeavored to find the commonality in them, as opposed to formulating them as an unknowable "other."

I feel the growing number of secondary literature concerning the work of Hubert Fichte would also benefit from a comparison to other works in German literature that thematize homoerotic desire. Hölderlin's Hyperion would work well in this regard. Robert Musil's Törless would provide a fruitful comparison between the construction of a brutally exercised masculinity and its eventual rejection, much like what we have seen as Detlev becomes Jäcki. Goethe's Wilhelm Meisters Lehrejahre could be used to compare the role of the stage and its relationship to the society and the
development of both Wilhelm and Detlev.

For a further discussion on how one creates alternate realities, Hermann Hesse's Steppenwolf could be useful as the main character's trip through the "Theater of the Mad" is not all that dissimilar to Jäcki's trip through Hamburg's underworld.

The methodology that I have tried to adhere to in this dissertation would certainly be applicable to other texts, where one of the central questions is how masculinity, be is heterosexual or homosexual, is configured. I would also hope that my use of the theoretical writings of Dollimore, Case, Kaufman, Fichte, Böhme, De Lauretis, and Sedgwick will help demonstrate the utility of these writings and applicability to the discipline of gay and lesbian studies. I am confident that as my research becomes more sophisticated, I am able to be one of the voices narrating the silences of queer desire.
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