Odyssée funèbre de l’homosexuel bis? Rereading
Tony Duvert’s Interdit de séjour

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Une antilittérature est [...] inséparable du temps où elle a lieu, son image du monde n’est pas l’hypothèse d’un futur de la perception et du sujet, mais la réécriture aventurée de ce que le présent étouffe et cache de lui-même.

Tony Duvert, “La Lecture introuvable”

After being hailed as “le jeune auteur qui monte, qu’on ne va pas tarder à citer et à imiter” (Poirot-Delpech), the polemical novelist and diatribist Tony Duvert suffered from indirect, insidious censorship (Phillips 13). Having in 1973 received France’s prestigious Prix Médicis for his fifth novel Paysage de fantaisie, lauded as a “très grand livre” (Chapsal 74), Duvert’s works thereafter all but disappeared from the public eye. As a consequence, now more than a half-decade after Duvert’s death, most of his dozen works of fiction as well as his two book-length essays remain unknown by the general public and overlooked by most critics. The Modern Language Association International Bibliography, for example, only lists a handful of studies on him.

Despite Duvert’s short-lived critical acclaim during the twenty years of “notoriety” he might have enjoyed as a literary figure from 1969 to 1989 (Benderson, “Politics” 5), the relative paucity of critical engagement since then with Duvert’s œuvre “clandestine” (Simonin 423), “honné ou oublié” (Gobill 30), can probably also be explained by the author’s portrayal of non-mainstream sexual relations, including homosexuality, sadomasochism, and necrophilia. In the wake of the “new puritanism” encouraging chastity that had emerged with AIDS in France in the 1980s (Phillips 10), Duvert’s unapologetic promotion in his “littérature renversante” (“Lecture” 13) of “pédophilie,” the interest he showed for what he calls the “fruit mûr” of “garçons impubères” (L’Enfant 21) coupled with the non-consensual sexual violence, the “startling” aggression and alienation (Benderson, “Diary” 11) characterizing their troubling content was shunned. As Académie Goncourt member François Nourissier posits, the themes privileged by Duvert “sentent le soufre” (7). Indeed, as historian Anne Simonin suggests, Duvert’s literary output was consequently “écrasée par son opprobre” (423).

Those who have been able to look beyond the controversial themes of the bulk of Duvert’s works typically mention the formal innovation, the “technique savamment élaborée” (Dalmas) at their heart. Bruce Benderson, Duvert’s American translator, for instance “roots” the author firmly in the nouveau roman (“Family” 8). Simonin sees Duvert first and foremost as “l’écrivain qui [en] marque la sortie” (417). John Phillips believes that Duvert’s style reflects a “clear allegiance” to it (152). And reviewer Allen Thiher suggests that Duvert’s early works resemble what the prose of the poète maudit Jean Genet might have become were it to have been rewritten by Alain Robbe-Grillet, the so-called “pope” of the New Novel (249).

To date Duvert’s creative process in and between works has been explored only by us. Focusing on Duvert’s early writing technique, we draw attention to the comprehensive, if not “obsessive” revisionism that we argue is evident in the author’s novels from the late 1960s and early to mid-1970s. In our study of what we deem the
“promiscuous” and “abusive” textuality flaunted across the two published versions of Duvert’s first novel, Récidive, we claim that in rewriting the 1967 version then republishing it in 1976, Duvert not only makes the ludic and self-conscious work more “readable,” as Thieher suggests in his review of it, but broadens its scope. As such, Duvert provides the first of the three novels he rewrote (with Portrait d’homme couteau and Interdit de séjour) a complex intertextual dimension for the “recidivism” it rehearses from cover to cover as well as between the covers of both of its published versions (“Rewriting” 138). In our subsequent analysis of Portrait d’homme couteau, Duvert’s second rewritten novel, we furthermore point to an overlooked theoretical text by the author, “un texte en forme d’éditorial sinon de manifeste” (Poiriot-Delpech), as indicative of the creative process at play in and between its 1969 and 1978 versions. At the same time as Duvert belittles the “grand récit bourgeois” by which public schools in France “balzacise[nt] ou flaubertise[nt] les enfants, plus qu’elle[s] ne les alphabétise[nt]” (“Lecture” 6) and embraces “les ratages, les incohérences, les contradictions, les blancs et les marginaux de ce récit social—fiction mal faite” (9), in this contentious text he underscores the liberatory potential of “unwriting” and rewriting:

La première des libérations, et peut-être la seule qui importe est done de
déscrire les formes du sujet, de son corps, de son désir, de sa violence, et de
récrire ce que le langage en a-tu-même si ce devait être leur inexistence.
Cette tâche aventureuse peut délivrer la parole et celui qui parle ; « le sexe et la
droque », comme disent les journaux, contribuent sans doute à la déscription ;
mais on ne voit que l’art qui réécrira. Double condition pour que le réel social
cesse de demeurer au sein même de celui qui le refuse—en son désir, sa
perception, sa jouissance (“Lecture” 15-16, emphasis added).

As with Récidive, in Portrait d’homme couteau Duvert’s distinctive process of
unwriting and rewriting is revealed in the very techniques criticized by the entrenched
and traditional literary establishment as out of place, unworthy of fiction. 1 We thus note:
both versions of both novels are foils for a strategy of subversion in which
unwriting is a precursor for and basis for rewriting. Expanding upon techniques
of the New Novel typically applied with a single version of a work, unwriting
in Duvert’s novels is exemplified through rewriting across versions of a work.
(“Rape,” emphasis added)

Now in addition to the second versions of Récidive and Portrait d’homme couteau,
Duvert published a second version of Interdit de séjour. 2 Initially penned between
September 1967 and March 1968, Interdit de séjour was first published in 1969, or at the
same time as Portrait d’homme couteau. Although then published in a “nouvelle édition
refondue” in 1971 (II: 215), 3 the work long remained inaccessible: “« interdit à la vente
aux mineurs de dix-huit ans », à l’« exposition » et à la « publicité »” (Simonin 415). It
would therefore seem logical to assume that this work also fits within the same
subversive parameters as those of his first two rewritten novels. As such his rewritten
third novel can be understood to constitute the last piece in a set of rewritten works that
the author intended to be read intertextually, or across their two published versions.

1 Examples include: the sequences riddling Duvert’s novels within and across their published versions with unexpected blank spaces; their jarring syntax; their sentence fragments; their narrative alternatives; their ironic
precisions; their editorializing; and their privileging of generative themes over more conventional literary
norms of plot, suspense, and character (Stoltzfus 114).
2 John Phillips is incorrect in asserting that Duvert’s first novel was “the only work which he considered
important enough to rewrite” (Forbidden 152).
3 Roman numerals in parenthetical references throughout this article indicate the published version of the novel
being discussed.
While Duvert does not abandon the aforementioned textual strategies he employs in *Récidive* and *Portrait d’homme couteau*, he adds to his creative repertoire in *Interdit de séjour* most notably through typographic and onomastic manipulation. How then do typographic and onomastic changes further exemplify and develop Duvert’s trademark unwriting through rewriting across both of the published versions of *Interdit de séjour*? How, for instance, does the 1969 version of the novel, with its distinctive *mise-en-page* and multiple sections of capitalized text, shed light on the 1971 version? How do changes within and to the extensive lists of names featured in this work, as well as the addition of text to and the cuts of text from it, help us better understand the importance of intentional and comprehensive rewriting—what Cathy Jellenik calls the “aesthetics of reiteration” (294)—in Duvert’s early works?

While warning readers of the novel’s graphic detail, which he observes is “plus que scabreux et cru,” reviewer André Dalmas also notes the originality of Duvert’s mixing of time frames in the 1969 version of both *Portrait d’homme couteau* and *Interdit de séjour*:

> ce qui est tout à fait neuf [...] c’est la transformation subie par la notion de temps romanesque. Présent et passé, mêlés dans le récit, sont en réalité, et en même temps, le présent d’hier et celui d’aujourd’hui, le passé d’hier et celui d’aujourd’hui. Si bien que les choses, les êtres, révèlent, à tout instant, en même temps que leur nature, les stigmates de leur vieillissement, ceux de la ruine, de la décomposition et de la mort.

In the latter portion of his review of both novels, where he refers specifically to *Interdit de séjour*, Dalmas further ties the original textual layout of Duvert’s third novel to its strange content. He suggests that the mysteries of the long funereal homosexual odyssey that Duvert unveils in the work lie within its convoluted, obsessively developed typography:

> *Interdit de séjour* se présente comme la longue odyssee funèbre de l’homosexuel, à la fois individu et foule, mais protégé quand il se trouve au sein de cette foule. Le livre se lit par étages successifs et sur plusieurs colonnes. Et cette typographie particulière accentue, développe jusqu’à l’obsession, l’impression fugante que donne le récit ininterrompu de ces randonnées nocturnes où lieux et villes ouvrent, devant les yeux du narrateur, des abîmes d’étrangeté.

If the jarring, Mallarmé-like⁴ textual layout of the 1969 version of *Interdit de séjour* accentuates the random juxtaposition of the myriad sexual encounters revealed in the work and thereby differentiates it from most other literary works, Duvert’s stripping of this “experimental” (Sebhan 142) typography from his 1971 version of the novel is what strikes the reader first in the rewritten work. The myriad blocks of text that Duvert arranges side by side in the first version, as though in dialogue or overlapping each other, are what he most noticeably wrote out of the later “version revue” (II: 215).

**First Pages**

These typographical differences are already apparent from the start of both versions of Duvert’s novel. In the 1969 version, seven blocks of text are juxtaposed with four blocks of text in smaller type in two fragmentary and inconsistently spaced columns. Of the blocks of text of larger type; one occupies the page from left to right but contains three irregularly spaced sequences that suggest missing parts; one takes up the right-hand side

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⁴ Although not a poem, the complexity of the graphic, spatial, and visual inscription in the first published version of *Interdit de séjour* is suggestive of Stéphane Mallarmé’s “Un Coup de dés,” which for Johanna Drucker “remains a touchstone of both historical and aesthetic reference for all subsequent twentieth-century typographic experimental poetry” (Visible 50).
and straddles part of the left-hand side of the page; one takes up the left-hand side and straddles part of the right-hand side of the page but contains an irregularly spaced sequence that also suggests a missing part; two occupy the left-hand side with one of the two containing an irregularly spaced sequence that again suggests a missing part; and two occupy the right-hand side. Occupying either the left-hand or the right-hand side of the page only, the blocks of text of smaller type give readers the illusion, at first glance, that Duvert's text is arranged into two equally spaced columns: three occupy the right-hand side of the page; and one occupies the left-hand side of the page. By laying out his text in such a way in the first published version of his novel, Duvert presents a work of multiple linguistic "constellations" (Shingler 65). Highlighted in the heterogeneous mise-en-page is the proliferation of sexual encounters, the dynamic series of many intersecting events and couplings (Bowie 142). As a result, the semantic integrity of Duvert's novel seems stripped, its narration scattered, jumbled up by a multiplicity of voices that all combine in various ways, that participate at the same time in more than one syntactic structure (Shingler). Indeed, the "semblants de narrateur" (Chapsal 74) within it all seem to compete for a say and to be read first in the same way that the cast of characters whose voices they represent all compete for the same pool of sexual partners and strive to be noticed first. With readers of the first version of Interdit de séjour constantly aware of the spatiality of the page, the order of reading—like the order of sexual encounters portrayed impressionistically in and between the text's columns—is thereby "improvised" (McHale 192), or decided on the fly.

By contrast, the text of the second version of Duvert's novel is all of the same type size and thus visually, at least, less convoluted and complicated. Although in removing the columns of text in the 1971 version Duvert seems to make reading it less improvisational, he does still manage to preserve its distinctively cacophonous and disjointed nature. Thus on the first page there remain irregularly spaced sequences in three blocks of text that suggest missing parts and that bespeak complex, multi-layered, non-linear (Shingler 67) narration: two in the first block of text; one in the fifth; and five in the sixth. These first pages of each version of the novel are duplicated side-by-side for easy comparison at the end of this article.

Now in addition to Duvert's stripping of the distinctive typography from the second version of his novel, he makes cuts to the text itself. What he chooses to preserve, for example, from the first page of the first version takes up a mere one third of the first page of the second version. The remainder of this page contains reworked text from the following page-and-a-half of the first version (Page 8 and half of Page 9). In other words, in the reworked version of his novel Duvert condenses his text by collapsing two-and-a-half pages into one.

Not only does Duvert modify the length and typography of his novel between its two published versions. He moreover makes changes to many of the sections of the text that he does choose to retain. Like the typographical changes we have already noted, these changes to the text itself are also readily evident from the first page of both versions. Take, for instance, the very first block of text in each. They are similar from the start: both suggest desolation, ruin, and the passage of time. But they also reveal differences in number, syntax, and logic. In the change from

"des immeubles sans vitrine, sans porte ni passants, 
personne sous les porches creux, déserts, jardins cert-
tains soir j'étais enragé l'été passait, un peu plus clair 
chaque jour"
the nouns “vitrine” and “porte” in the first line of each are pluralized, the noun “passant” is replaced with the noun “lumières,” and “sans porte ni passants” is syntactically shifted to “sans lumières ni portes” in the second version. More striking, the second and half of the third line of the first version is barely recognizable in the second version of Duvert’s novel. In the change from

personne sous les porches creux, déserts, jardins certains soir j’étais enragé

to

la

nuit déserte et les squares embrumés

a sense of desertion (“les porches […] déserts” and “la nuit déserte”) is all that these sections of Duvert’s text seem to have in common. As if further to underline the lack of light (“sans lumières”) highlighted in its first line, in the second version the fact that the days were growing shorter (“l’été passait, un peu moins clair chaque jour”) seems, moreover, more logical than the lengthening days (“l’été passait, un peu plus clair chaque jour”) that are suggested in the temporal disjointedness, the “temps sans temporalité” (Robbe-Grillet 243) of the first.

Duvert’s reworking of this portion of the first block of his text renders it more logical. He furthermore cuts from his text the questions following it: “Où etais-je?” and “combien d’années?” However in making the second version of the work less self-conscious, it is no less ambiguous. For at the same time as removing the first of these questions, which separates the first and third blocks of text of the novel’s first version, Duvert marries them in the second version. As a result,

cinq, six huit heures sans
but, marcher, prendre patience, m’user, seule idée,
sans volonté

is incorporated—along with a shift from the first person to the third person—into the first block of text of the second version as

marcher des heures au long,
s’épuiser, marcher sans fin, chercher encore

with the noun “heures,” the verb “marcher,” and the synonyms “m’user” and “s’épuiser” remaining as the only recognizable elements of the text. Duvert furthermore weaves pieces of the ninth and tenth sections of text from his first version into the third section of the second version:

cinquante francs perdus j’ai
aimé un petit Tunisien
If Duvert’s substitution of the relatively general “un petit Arabe” for the geographically more specific “un petit Tunisien” of the first makes the nationality of the sexual partner being described more ambiguous or inclusive in the second version, in revising his work Duvert also makes the sexual act itself more blatant as he consistently does throughout the revised version of his novel. The general direct object pronoun that suggests the licking of a person (“je le lèche”) is therefore replaced in the second version with the specific body part that is licked (“je le lèche sa fente”) as well as with a comment on the relative cleanliness thereof (“il faut les torcher avant de s’en servir”). Whether this body part requires cleaning or not, the adjective describing the rear end, or the metaphorical “cut” in the body of the pre-pubescent boy from which the narrator derives his oral pleasure is, however, hairless in both versions, and the specific placement of the adjective—like the tongue of the narrator—is not an issue: “percée d’une imberbe coupure” in the first and “une coupure imberbe” in the second.

Nicknames

These differences that are already obvious from the first page of both versions of Duvert’s novel anticipate the differences of varying degrees all underlined in the mobile, impermanent, anonymous, random, and illicit encounters it stages between tricks, drag queens, and gigolos, and which are played out, “constructed and deconstructed” (Phillips 150) throughout and across both versions of the novel. As we have already seen on the first page of each version of the novel, much of the shorter, 215-paged second version follows the general order of the longer, 248-paged first version. This thereby suggests that in reworking his text Duvert strove, at the macrotextual level at least, to preserve its overall sequencing. The later version of his novel is, moreover, consistently stripped of the striking columnar typography of the earlier version. In place of the vertically oriented and intersecting blocks of text of the 1969 version, the 1971 version privileges blocks of text that are horizontally oriented instead. A case in point that dramatically enacts this shift from the vertical to the horizontal is a funereal List of often sexually or scatologically suggestive nicknames that can be found near the end of both versions of the novel and that conjures up a colorful cast of characters, renowned for their sexual

5 In addition to its striking columnar typography, the 1969 version of Interdit de séjour is also notable for its one-time incorporation of an unusual font to represent the graffiti one can read in railway bathrooms:

"fâle j’allais à la gare Saint-
Lazare avec d’autres folles, mes
copines, on s’ennuyait certains
jours malgré ces dessins dans
les W.C.:

Grandes Pines Empalant des Femmes qui Ecart-
tenl leur Con

(non signés)

(1 : 14)

Neither this block of bathroom graffiti—with the verb “écarter” spread across two lines, as though to underline the action of the loose women to which it draws attention—nor the font meant to represent it is duplicated in the 1971 version. However, Duvert makes repeated use of a similar font to differentiate text types in the beginning sections of the novel he published in 1970, Le Voyageur. Warranting further study, it is as though in the 1969 version of Interdit de séjour the author is briefly rehearsing a technique that will also distinguish his next work from all his others.
distinctiveness. This “registre des croque-morts,” evokes cruelty, depravity, and nobility. At times hilarious and tragic, legendary and outlandish, it is comprised of:

noms qui disent leur cruauté la veulerie salace et vicieuse de leurs actes, l'image éteinte, broûillée mais simple comme un rôle de pantomime, qu'ils avaient conçu d'eux-mêmes, titre d'une cour lointaine, brutale, repères d'une contrée dessinée dans les taches d'un drap où les orifices déposent leur miel, les sexes moulent leur forme, les glandes, les bouches bavent de sommeil—on les murmure aux jardins, sur les seuils, dans les baisers d'accueil, comme l'urine dont les chiens mouillent leur chemin familier, les fauves leur nourriture, on en marque les inconnus avant que l'obscurité des danses et des alcôves les engloutisse [...] (I: 236).

As though anticipating the shift between versions of this list of nicknames from the vertical to the horizontal, Duvert repeats it within the 1969 version in the pages directly preceding and following the list. The long, thin columns of text comprising Pages 234 and 235 before the list, for example, give way to the dense and exclusively horizontal text of Pages 241, 242, and 243 after it, respectively. In the second version of Interdit de séjour, Duvert reorganizes, condenses the 256 nicknames that in the first version stretch over nearly five pages into one-and-a-half pages of “mots silhouettes sans lesquels on ne s'identifierait pas et dont les folies marquaient chacun” (II: 202). Despite being a longer list—comprised in the 1971 version of 304 names instead of the 256 of the 1969 version, because the names are organized horizontally they ultimately occupy less space in Duvert's text. But more than merely making the revised list more compact by stringing it horizontally across the page, Duvert also alters it, therefore mirroring again at the microtextual level of his novel the unwriting and rewriting process that he amplifies at the macrotextual level throughout and between its two versions.

Besides the differing spatial arrangement and length of the two lists of nicknames, there are several additional notable differences. First, 49 names (about one-fifth) from the 1969 version of the novel are modified slightly in the 1971 version. Consider, for instance, the names from the first column (Page 236) that are duplicated in Illustration II above with their equivalents in the second version (also duplicated above, in Illustration III) and in which the following changes occur: “Croquederche” becomes “Croque-au­derche”; “Bouffechiottes” becomes “Bouffe-aux-chiottes”; “Chaudelance” becomes “Chaude-lance”; “La Mensongère” becomes “La Menteuse”; “La Demi-mal” becomes “La D'mi-mal”; “Burn'enflammes” becomes “Burn'en-flammes”; “La Victorieuse” becomes “la Victoire”; “La Vermicelle” becomes “Vermicelle”; and “Pochette-Surprise” becomes “la Pochette.” These microtextual differences duplicate punctuational or spelling changes that Duvert makes elsewhere between the published versions of his novel. Of the full 49 names in the list that have been slightly modified, all but one of them appear in a different order, or “slip” to a different position in the list in the 1971 version. Only “La Vaseline” (I: 238) / “la Vas’line” (II: 203), named after the petroleum-based product intended to enhance sexual pleasure by reducing friction, enabling one sexual organ to slip more easily into another—but which, because it does not itself move position in the list—ironically does not exact “slippage.” Thus “Vit-en-fleurs” follows “Cornebite” just as “Décrasse-fente” follows “Doigt-curieux” in the 1969 version (I: 237), whereas in the 1971 version “Vit-en-fleur” follows “la Mème” (II: 202) and “la Décrasse” follows “la Gironde” (II: 203). These changes in the order of names also parallel changes in the order of blocks of text that are made elsewhere in the novel. Similarly, of the 133 names that Duvert does not change elsewhere in the 1971 version, only sixteen of them—or about one-sixteenth—appear in the same order as in the 1969 version. Thus, for example, “La
Glacée" follows "La Merveille," "La Sept-ciel" follows "la Colique," and "La Scritch" follows "La Scratch" (I: 238; II: 202) in both versions of Duvert's text. This partial respect for the order of some of the names, like the changes we have just noted, is played out repeatedly in other textual sequences between versions of the novel too. Indeed, 117 of them—or nearly one-half—appear in different places in the reworked list. Thus "La Monsieur" follows "Tournelune" in the 1969 version but follows "l'Enjouée" in the 1971 version, just as "La Sons-et-parfums" follows "La Scritch" in the former but "la Colibri" in the latter (I: 238; II: 202). Also striking is that 74—or nearly one-third—of the names from the 1969 version have no apparent equivalent in the 1971 version. No matter how clever or colorful, sexually suggestive nicknames such as "Bave-en-tasse" or "Jouit-sous-clef" (I: 238) exist in the 1969 version of the novel alone. Similarly, there are 122 new names featured in the list from the 1971 version: these comprise the 74 names from the 1969 version that have no apparent equivalent in the 1971 version, the 48 additional names by which Duvert extends the list, and therefore represent between one-third and one-half of the new list.

**Capitalization**

Just as the scent of urine by which dogs mark their spot can with the passing of each new canine be diluted, compounded, resurrected, or intensified, in reordering, reworking this ephemeral list of onomastic "silhouettes" from the shadowy past, Duvert dramatizes the shifting, contested spaces of the dynamic homosexual underworld. Furthermore, the changes Duvert makes to the list of names between both published versions of his novel—like the changes we have already discussed between the first page of each version of the novel—rehearse myriad additional changes he makes elsewhere in *Interdit de séjour*. Played out again and again across and between both published versions of this novel—whose very title suggests both illegality and impermanence—we therefore see minor differences (in capitalization and punctuation, for example) juxtaposed with more significant differences such as the dislocation and fracture of the novel’s narrative form. As in *Récidive* and *Portait d’homme couteau*, they duplicate the novel’s presentation of homosexual identity as fluid: "constantly self-questioning, constructed from fragments of memory and fantasy"; as well as "both criminalized by and alienated from the surrounding society" (Phillips 154).

Take capitalization, for instance. Between the two versions of his novel, Duvert preserves it in some cases but writes it out in others. Just as the capitalization of the letters "J" and "C" is respected in the nicknames "La Jumelle" and "La Capote," for example, in both versions of the list of names (I: 239; II: 203), in a sequence where Duvert uses capitalization as a strategy to highlight the pleasure experienced by one of the many random sexual partners in the novel, he preserves it. As a result, what in the 1969 version reads as

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ils gémissaient encore, leur voix gonflait, m’explosait dans
les oreilles, ils allaient jouir
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**Note:** In the 1971 version, the first letter of the definite article is not capitalized, whereas it is capitalized in the 1969 version. This is because the 1971 version lists the names horizontally, as though in a block of text, whereas the 1969 version lists them vertically. It is also notable that in the second version the names are not separated by commas and presented rather as one monolithic block.
is collapsed and transformed in the 1971 version into the more grammatically correct

ils se branlaient je les branlais entre mes dents je trancheais me vergeais ils ne gémisaient plus leur voix gonflait explosait OH C'EST BON BON DONNE-LE-MOI TU BAISES BIEN CHÉRI DES QUE JE T'AI VU TU ENTENDS MON CHÉRI TU ENTENDS DES QUE CHÉRI TU JE T'AIME TU ENTENDS MON CHÉRI TU BAISES BIEN CHÉRI DONNE-LE DONNE ENCORE C'EST A MOI C'EST LE MIEN RENDS-LE-MOI JE TE DIS RENDS-LE TOUT DONNE DONNE-LE C'EST A MOI AH TU ME BAISES BIEN TOI JE PEUX DIRE T'ES UN HOMME UN VRAI HOMME TOI CHÉRI OH PLUS FORT C'EST TROP BBBBBBBBB

Yet this is not to say that this textual sequence is identical in both versions. For besides the change in the number of lines that sets up the sequence, between the 1969 and the 1971 version there are changes in syntax, spacing, and agency. Similarly, within the capitalized sequence itself—and just as we see in the changes to the list of nicknames between versions of the novel, between “Belle-Burette” and “Belles-burettes” or “La Dame-Jeanne” and “la Dam’jeanne” (I: 237; II: 203), for instance—there are subtle, easily overlooked changes between versions: accents on the capital letters “E” and “E” in the 1969 version but not in the 1971 version; a missing hyphen in the three imperatives of the 1969 version (“DONNE-LE MOI,” “RENDS-LE MOI,” and “DONNE-LE MOI”) but which are added in the 1971 version; an exclamation mark after “TU ENTENDS” in the 1969 version; the removal of the first letter “B” which presumably is intended to suggest the verb “baiser” after “TU” and before “JE” in the 1971 version; the addition of “MON CHÉRI” after “TU ENTENDS” and before “TU BAISES BIEN” in the 1971 version; the change from “C’EST A MOI C’EST A MOI C’EST LE MIEN” in the 1969 version to the more emphatic, more urgent “DONNE-LE DONNE ENCORE C’EST A MOI” in the 1971 version; the change from “JE TE DIS DE ME LE RENDRE” in the 1969 version to the more pressing, sexually greedier “JE TE DIS RENDS-LE TOUT” in the 1971 version; the change from “DONNE-LE DONNE-LE MOI” in the 1969 version to “DONNE DONNE-LE” in the 1971 version; the addition of the direct personal pronoun “me” in “TU ME BAISES BIEN” in the 1971 version; the removal of “QUE” and the contraction of the subject and verb in “JE PEUX DIRE T’ES UN HOMME” in the 1971 version; the removal of “TU ES” before “UN VRAI HOMME” in the 1971 version; the change from seven letters in the “BBBBBBBB,” which again presumably suggests the adverb “bien” of the 1969 version, to nine letters in the more exaggerated and drawn out “BBBBBBBBB” of the 1971 version, which are also preceded by the adverb “TROP” thereby reinforcing the erogenous pleasure upon which the whole sequence insists.

Capitalization might be preserved in this sequence, but in others it is not. Just as block capitals can be used for emphasis, or to underline sexual pleasure as we see above, in another section from the 1969 version of his novel Duvert uses block capitals to highlight the frustration of the shadowy narrator as he screams to be let back inside after his mother locks him out:

et cette sale roulure le soir mainte-nant ma mère m’enfermait tournait la
cé de ma chambre emportait cette
clef sortait se faire bourrer par
mon beau-père du jour, racolé sur les
Champs-Elysées, devant les vitrines,
ou dans un bar snob
PUTAIN DE GARCE D'ENCULÉE je gueulais contre la porte,
si ça pouvait ameuter les voisins, je gueulais des heures
jusqu'après minuit VIEILLE CONNE DE PUTTE DE CON DE
MERDE DE FOUTUE MAQUERELLE D'ENFOIRÉE DE FOUTUE
CHASSÉE VA TE FAIRE ENDOSSER SALOPE OUVRE-MOI TU EN-
TENDS LA PORTE GARCE DE PUTAIN DE GARAGE À BITES
je savais causer mais les meilleures je ne m'en souvenais
jamais d'ailleurs elle ne rentrait pas avant quatre heures
da matin, j'étais endormi

(I: 102)

Despite the continued use of swear words by the frustrated narrator in the later
version, because Duvert removes the block capitals in the 1971 version of the novel, this
sequence reads as less stridently urgent. Although Duvert makes changes to the text
itself, it is no different—typographically speaking—from the small-lettered sequences
that directly precede and follow it:

mais j'avais commencé à la gêner ma mère
elle décidait de m'enfermer le soir avant
d'aller à son boulot elle me poussait dans ma chambre
tournait la clef et l'emportait quelle brute elle racolait
n'importe quel type sur les Champs-Elysées devant les vitri-
nes ou dans un bar snob elle ne rentrait pas avant de s'être
fait bourrer le con et le porte-monnaie la putain de garce
d'enculée je tapais aux murs j'essayais d'ameuter les voisins
je criais la moitié de la nuit vieille comme de pute de foute
morue je t'endosse salope garce de putain de garage à bites
je cherchais tous les gros mots que je savais j'en faisais vite
le tour on m'a trop bien élevé quand elle se couchait enfin
vers quatre heures je m'étais endormi

(II: 80)

As we have already noted, besides changes in capitalization such as these, Duvert
also reworks sections of text between both versions of his novel in much the same way
that he does with many of the nicknames on the list discussed earlier. At the
macrotextual, organizational level the two published versions of Interdit de séjour can be
considered similar because they are both broken up into twenty-one unnamed,
unnamed and parallel sequences.7 Within many of these parallel sequences, however,
Duvert both adds to and excises text between the 1969 and 1971 versions of his novel,
again underlining through unwriting across versions the impermanent, circulating nature
of the encounters he chooses to privilege and reorder as though in an ever-shifting
“puzzle dont les pièces se refusent l'une l'autre” (Duvert, Récidive 130-1).

7 The breaks occur on the following pages: 14, 24, 29, 38, 49, 60, 68, 74, 82, 94, 115, 128, 146, 150, 164, 168,
181, 191, 198, and 204 in the 1969 version; and 11, 19, 25, 33, 40, 47, 52, 56, 65, 73, 92, 103, 121, 123, 137,
143, 155, 161, 166, and 169 in the 1971 version, respectively.


Erection / Expansion

Representative of the ten sequences of various lengths in the 1971 version of the novel where Duvert adds new text that is not found in the 1969 version8 is this one in which the narrator discusses the measures to which he goes to arouse one of his sexual partners at a nightclub. The 1969 version9 reads:

By contrast, the expanded, more detailed 1971 version reads this way:

Unlike the shorter 1969 version, which is recounted in the imperfect tense, the longer 1971 version is recounted in the present tense, thereby rendering the action more immediate and direct. Additionally, like other sequences that Duvert alters between versions of his novel, it is more graphically provocative than the equivalent sequence in the 1969 version. The bother of a partner with difficulties getting an erection (“il ne bandait plus guère”) thus becomes the bother of a partner who no longer has penetrative sexual relations with the narrator (“il ne m’enfile presque plus”). Similarly, just as the

9 As it is typeset, this block of text is much narrower and more compact in Duvert’s published novel.
relatively vague “beaucoup d’alcool” of the first version is made slightly more specific as “des litres d’alcool” in the second version, so too are the reasons behind the erectile difficulties of the narrator’s partner (“c’est moi qu’il n’aime plus qui l’empêche de bander”). Whereas in the 1969 version we learn little about the interior of the nightclub, the 1971 version provides details both about its décor and clientèle: the mirrors on the walls which enable the self-admiring dancing style of the patrons. In keeping with this move to greater detail between versions of the text, specific body parts are also privileged in the 1971 version: the general “me pelait” is therefore more targeted in “me pelote les fesses” and leads directly to anal stimulation (“il m’enfonce un doigt dans le trou”). Furthermore, where in the 1969 version the narrator’s partner takes him to the toilets to make love to him discretely (“pour [l’]aimer”), the 1971 version is less innocuous, more exhibitionistically jarring: indeed without warning, the narrator is literally dragged to the toilets and penetrated like a dog. Finally, while in the first version provocation is not a possibility (“sans la possibilité de provoquer les gens”) in the second version it becomes a necessity, if not a requirement for sex: “il faut qu’il nous exhibe et qu’il provoque les gens sinon pas de baise possible.”

Reduction / Disruption

If by expanding portions of the later version of his novel Duvert can lend more graphic color to it, what then does he achieve when he cuts text from it? Consider the dramatic textual repercussions of Duvert’s cutting from the 1971 version the sequence found some four-fifths into the 1969 version. It involves discussion of plans for an upcoming marriage between two anonymous characters—both designated uselessly, as is the person inviting the narrator, by the capital letter “N.”—and therefore seems strikingly out of place in a world where multiplicity, impermanence, and infidelity are the norm, where serial circularity and the exchange of sexual partners are favored over the permanent, sanctified bonds of committed relationships. In the 1969 version the narrator gets invited to the wedding right after he has earned himself 20 francs masturbating yet another complete stranger:

et dès que je fus sorti de la tasse où j’avais branlé un type pour vingt francs, N. apparu et m’invita au mariage de N.

comment ça, N. se marie?
oui, avec N.

dix types branlés dans la jour-
né s’il fait beau cela fait deux cents francs et avec deux cents francs on peut aller faire la folle dans trois ou quatre bars

et qui sera au mariage?
il y aura des garçons et des filles, c’est-à-dire que tout le monde se déguise, je les cherche, il faut que tout le monde soit là, il n’en manquera pas un, tu parles un soir où on enterre sa vie de folle fille ça compte

en quoi tu te mettras?
moi je vais me travestir
No mention is made of a wedding in the 1971 version, by contrast. Instead, it privileges the orgy that in the first version will surely follow the marriage banquet and reads the following way:

j’entrais dans la tasse je demandais vingt francs au type pour le branler dix types branlés en une journée si c’est les vacances et qu’il fait beau je les trouve et j’ai deux cents francs et avec deux cents francs je peux aller faire la folle dans trois ou quatre bars ou m’acheter des chaussures une copine entrait dans la tasse elle m’invitait à une partouse je disais non elle disait mais si et m’expliquait qui serait là et je disais oui et Ça tombe bien j’ai pas encore joui aujourd’hui Alors garde tes forces elle disait on serait bien vingt oh ma vieille ce qu’on va s’envoyer j’étais content ma soirée serait oui oui et je lui demandais si on pourrait se travestir elle croyait que oui elle avait même une idée l’oufoque s’habiller en homme je lui demande comment c’est et elle dit

More striking than the fact that in the 1969 version the narrator is invited by an unnamed acquaintance to a wedding between two unnamed parties after which there will be a huge orgy, and that in the 1971 version the narrator is invited to an orgy only with no mention of a wedding, is that starting on Page 211—reminiscent of the long list of sexually suggestive nicknames we discussed earlier—and stretching some nine pages across the columns of text and in different font size in the 1969 version alone are the names of the thousands of wedding guests.\(^{10}\) The first four blocks of names are duplicated by way of example below:

\[
\text{tu es sûr qu’ils seront là? mais oui il y aura Basile Rigobert Lucien Guillame Arcadius Félix Marcel Antoine Sébastien Vincent Raymond Timothée Paul François Ignace Blaise Gilbert et Romuald Valentin Théodule Gabin Sylvain Pépin Gérard Mathias Nestor Montan Casimir Adrien Thomas Jean Grégoire Zacharie Cyriaque Cyrille Joseph Victorien Emmanuel Gontran}
\]

\(^{10}\) In many instances, invitees share the same name. Examples of the “tas de types en double triple et plus” are: “les sept Lucien,” “les dix-huit Marcel,” “les trente-huit Paul,” “les quarante-neuf François,” “les cent-quatre Michel,” “les sept cents Bernard,” “les cent-neuf cents Jean,” and “les deux mille Edmond” (II: 212).
Of course, having unwritten the wedding from the 1971 version of his novel there is no longer any need for a list of wedding guests. Not only does the anonymity of the orgy therefore take center stage in the later version of the novel, but in writing the wedding and list of invitees out of his work in favor of the orgy alone Duvert further underscores the randomness and juxtapositions, “l’embarras du choix” (I: 212) by which sexual interactions at orgies are characterized. More importantly, by completely cutting the names of guests invited to celebrate and sanctify permanence, by writing them entirely out of the second version of his novel—and thereby not just reordering or modifying them as he does with the list of nicknames—Duvert also “cuts loose” the subsequent pages in his text. He thus rehearses textually the various combinations and recombinations that one might imagine sexually at a party whose very goal is the circulation and repetition of no-strings-attached pleasure. For while the 1971 version of Duvert’s text more or less respects the order of the 1969 version up until this point, with Duvert’s cutting of the wedding from it and the showcasing of the orgy alone, it becomes increasingly difficult for readers to determine the logic behind what sections of his text Duvert chose to preserve, to “marry” with others, and why. Here, for example, and in order is how the text from the 1969 version plays out—with varied modifications of content in each case—in the 1971 version: two lines, starting a new section of text from the 1969 version (I: 204) are found half-way down the page that also starts a new section of text in the 1971 version (II: 169); nine lines further down the same page of the 1969 version (I: 204) are found at the bottom of the same page of the 1971 version and extending—this time as seven and not nine lines—onto the page thereafter (II: 169-170); the three segments of text in small font from the left-hand column that we have cited above and which come four pages later in the 1969 version (I: 208) directly follow the seven lines already mentioned and appear in a compact segment of fourteen lines in the 1971 version (II: 170); six lines that come six lines later in the 1969 version (I: 209) directly follow the fourteen lines of the 1971 version but are now five lines; a more than half-page section directly following the six lines in the 1969 version is found in the 1971 version some two pages later than the five lines and extends over two pages; the short section directly following the more than half-page section in the 1969 version (I: 209) is found nearly a page after the preceding section from the 1971 version (II: 174); two segments of text—one from the right-hand and one from the left-hand column—in the 1969 version and that come more than three pages after the short section just mentioned in the 1969 version (I: 213) is found in a compact textual clump in the 1971 version nearly three pages before the section just mentioned in that same version (II: 171); a half-page section spread out across two columns in the 1969 version and that directly follows the section we have just described (I: 213) comes more than a half-page after the compact textual clump and stretches over two pages (II: 171-172). In other words, text is moved both forward and backward with no apparent rhyme or reason between the 1969 and 1971 versions of his novel just as participants at an orgy might move from partner to partner or
from body part to body part with no particular rationale other than unbridled, insatiable desire.

**Shifts in Text Between Versions of *Interdit de séjour***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1969 Version</th>
<th>1971 Version</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Page 204</td>
<td>Page 169</td>
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<tr>
<td>Page 204</td>
<td>Pages 169-170</td>
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<td>Page 208</td>
<td>Page 170</td>
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<td>Page 209</td>
<td>Page 170</td>
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<td>Page 209</td>
<td>Pages 172-173</td>
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<td>Page 213</td>
<td>Page 171</td>
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<tr>
<td>Page 213</td>
<td>Pages 171-172</td>
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Further underlining the textual disruptiveness triggered by the author's removal of any mention of matrimony from the 1971 version of the novel are the nearly fourteen new pages of text that follow and that have no recognizable equivalent in the 1969 version. Just as writing the wedding out of the second version of his novel privileges the orgy and writing the names of the attendees out of the text respects the anonymity of all the attendees, this entire rewritten section of Duvert's novel—following the sections highlighting random textual recombinations—is essentially as unrecognizable as the three characters all labeled uselessly as "N." in the 1969 version. Stability and permanence are thereby again trumped in this underworld whose raison d'etre is sexual exchange by multiplicity and novelty in the same way as entire sections of text from the 1969 version of the novel are in the 1971 version reconfigured or written out of it.

***

Having amply expanded the techniques of the New Novel that are typically applied within a single version of a work by exemplifying rewriting across both published versions of *Interdit de séjour* as well as through his "fiction mal faite" ("Lecture" 9) in and across the two published versions of both *Portrait d'homme couteau* and *Récidive*, Duvert predictably tires of textual experimentation. Although typography still plays a part in his next novel, *Le Voyageur*, and his subsequent novels, *Paysage de fantaisie* and *Journal d'un innocent*, are written in a non-traditional style, each of these works is notably published in a single version only. Moreover, Duvert ultimately reverts in his later novels to "d'early traditional modernist techniques" (Thiher, *L'ile* 595) and in his aggressively militant extended essays on childhood sexuality and man-boy relationships to "expressing his ideas as clearly as possible" (Brongersma 9). Indeed, the author admits:

si j'ai besoin de moyens qu'on peut appeler traditionnels, c'est parce que je parle d'autres choses. Ce ne sont plus du tout les mêmes sortes d'individus, les mêmes sortes de personnages, les mêmes sortes de situations. Et à chaque chose ses moyens. Il est impossible de mettre en scène comme je l'ai fait des petites familles bourgeoises, ouvrières, paysannes etc... tout ça ensemble dans le même paquet, en écrivant comme j'ai écrit *Interdit de séjour*, par exemple. Ça n'est pas faisable. ("Non" 16)

The innovation and experimentation showcased in Duvert's early prose works, played out in the "désécriture" between their versions and most strikingly obvious in *Interdit de séjour* through typography, onamastics, capitalization, and textual recombination, ultimately lends itself to them alone and the contexts that only they privilege. The rewriting Duvert thrice flaunts within and across versions of a text can be understood therefore to be only passingly "recidivist," confined to, contained within and between versions of his first three novels alone. Beyond this textual triad, rewriting,
unwriting, unwriting through rewriting proves to be an outgrown subversive strategy. Out of place, written out as an option from the start in Duvert’s later works, it too is, for all intents and purposes, “interdit de séjour.”

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