Some historians feel defeated when forced to silence by a paucity of source material. Others, perhaps with fewer scruples, look upon such lacunae as an opportunity to give free rein to their imagination. The conflict between these two approaches is mainly methodological, although we might observe that lack of evidence deters the scientific investigator, whereas perhaps inspiring the literary scholar.

As a medievalist, I find that a lack of sources typifies the period, and one simply has to make the best of what is available. However, as a historian I find it painful when primary source material exists but is inaccessible because of legal restrictions. But my admiration grows for the “literati,” who, faced with fragments, are inspired to piece words together, as an archaeologist assembles potsherds.¹

What we know about the French poet and novelist, Baron Jacques d'Adelswärd² consists very much of pieced together shards, some dubious, others probably assembled in the wrong positions, and many more simply missing. The image which emerges is thus full of guesswork, and will probably remain so.

The first fragments I discovered were in Les Amitiés particulières (1943/1944), Les Amours singulières (1949), Du Vésuve à l'Etna (1952) and Notre amour (1967) by the French writer Roger Peyrefitte (1907-2000). It was only in 1977 that I was able to examine a copy of his L'Exilé de Capri which had appeared in 1959. In reading that novel I became convinced that Jacques d'Adelswärd was, rather than a character in fiction, a real historical person. My curiosity was aroused. I decided to start a close examination of this writer who, following the publication of Peyrefitte's novel, had acquired a reputation as a pitiful poseur whose life had been one great melodrama.

Having decided to study d'Adelswärd, I began to accumulate more fragments, mostly from secondary sources. During the 1980s my curiosity was further aroused by acquaintance with d'Adelswärd's own work which, because of the small editions in which it appeared, is difficult to locate. In the Royal Library in The Hague I found one volume of poetry, two novellas, and a virtually complete set of the magazine, Akademos, which d'Adelswärd had edited in 1909. I was also able to examine a selection of d'Adelswärd's poetry which a Belgian collector had copied and donated to the Dr. Edward Brongersma Foundation.³ Confrontation with this authentic material came as something of a shock: it revealed d'Adelswärd as a far more energetic, sincere, and much less frivolous person than the character portrayed in Peyrefitte's novel and in other secondary sources.

The first, but least important, question I asked myself was what went wrong, starting with Peyrefitte? Soon I realized that Peyrefitte had probably just wanted to write a good novel, and that a novelist is not restricted by the rigorous standards of biography. But, then, who was the historical person Jacques d'Adelswärd? I had to find additional primary sources, more of the author's own work, newspaper articles, archive materials, and observations about him by his contemporaries.

Peyrefitte's novel proved to be very helpful. I often admired the balance it struck between being a readable story and dry biographical and bibliographical data. I discovered that Peyrefitte was doing his utmost to make the most responsible use of his material. That suspicion was further increased by reading the definitive version of L'Exilé de Capri. Although this edition lacks Jean Cocteau's foreword (found only in the first edition),⁵ it is often more detailed, and weaves more
bibliographical information into the story. I considered this a generous gesture on the part of Peyrefitte towards his curious readers. However, in the novel, one incident still remains unclear: in 1903 d'Adelswärd was brought before the court on morals charges involving a number of Parisian schoolboys. In both versions of his novel, Peyrefitte glosses over the actual facts of the affair which led up to d'Adelswärd's arrest and subsequent six months prison sentence, five years deprivation of civil rights, and 50 francs fine.

In 1988, in the National Archives in The Hague, I came across some old inventories of important Parisian archives. I asked myself whether material concerning the d'Adelswärd case might still exist, and sent some letters to Paris. The Director of the Archives of the Préfecture de Police informed me at the end of March that a search of the archives had not revealed any relevant material. In May, the chief custodian of the Archives of the Paris and Île-de-France region informed me that the dossier of the affair had "regretfully" been destroyed; they could only furnish a photocopy of the sentence. Meanwhile, I had approached the Archives de France (formerly the Archives Nationales). In mid-March I was told that they did indeed have the material I had requested, but I was at the same time informed that there was a restriction on its being made public until 2003, and that I would have to apply to the director of the archive for access. My written request was refused in April 1988 with the statement that no reasonable arguments could be found to support such a request to the Ministère de la Justice (Ministry of Justice). After a few days of discouragement, I decided not to be stopped by this decision. Had my French perhaps not been correct, or had faulty wording directed my request to the wrong person?

I wrote a letter to the cultural attaché at the Dutch embassy in Paris asking him to intercede on my behalf. I received a positive and enthusiastic response. There followed negotiations with the Archives de France, and in October the cultural attaché informed me that a compromise had been reached: the Archives de France would not object to my inspecting the dossier provided I gave assurance in writing that I would publish nothing which might reveal the identity of the children involved. After wrestling with this offer, I decided not to accept it, because I already knew the identity of a number of the boys from other sources, and above all because I was unable to obtain any guarantee that the Ministry of Justice would also respond positively to my request.

L'Exilé de Capri

It must first be said that Peyrefitte did outstanding research for his novel. He possessed all the writer's works; he immersed himself in the secondary sources and visited places where d'Adelswärd had stayed; he spoke with many people, including family members, who had known the writer personally. Such efforts have, no doubt, given the novel its reputation for historical authenticity, a reputation neither entirely unjustified, nor fully deserved. Peyrefitte did not want to limit himself to writing a historical biography or a biographical novel, as can be gathered from the remarks of Jean-Paul Sartre who, in 1958, spoke with Peyrefitte in Capri about the structure of the book. Sartre's evaluation, with which apparently the author agreed, was that: "The homosexual theme is very interesting. It also gives you the opportunity to portray the decadence of a whole society."

The final result, L'Exilé de Capri (fig. 1), is a distortion, however brilliant, perhaps revealing more about Peyrefitte and his times than about d'Adelswärd and his. It is a kind of homosexual gossip about a particular segment of that community at the turn of the century: who did it, might have done it, or perhaps could have done it, and with whom. The hero (and, in any case, the historical d'Adelswärd) finds himself thrown together with most of the "notorious" homosexuals of the fin-de-siècle and the belle époque, who are depicted as motivated principally by promiscuity. But perhaps Peyrefitte was really imposing his own world of the 1940s and 1950s upon d'Adelswärd.
The point is not that homosexuals of one era are more or less sexually driven than homosexuals of another era, but rather that the reasons for following a promiscuous life-style in 1900 were often different from the reasons in the 1950s. These differences are what Peyrefitte denies his readers. He misses the opportunity to provide essential information about the mentality of the people of that time, information that could help us to understand them. D'Adelswärd is to Peyrefitte merely a "phenomenon," a caricature with only a few essential features of his own to distinguish him from all those others who, since history began, have embraced "the love that dared not speak its name." As to the real personality of Jacques d'Adelswärd, Peyrefitte often maintains a malicious silence. One reads little in the novel about the long struggle, so persistent in d'Adelswärd's work, between woman and boy, between hetero- and homosexuality. One thing is clear in the novel: d'Adelswärd's ultimate choice was the adolescent boy, because he did not find mature men a likely alternative, and not (we might add) because he loathed women.

Another objection I have is to the way Peyrefitte somehow manages to involve d'Adelswärd in the vicissitudes of famous homosexual contemporaries. Perhaps he does this to compensate for the fact that he does not define his hero very well, but the historically curious reader must here be on his guard. For instance, the presence of d'Adelswärd at the confrontation between a group of English tourists and Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas in the Hotel Quisisana in Capri in 1897 is extremely dubious. Jacques d'Adelswärd did indeed admire Wilde, but there is not one scrap of evidence, as far as I know, that they ever saw each other, much less met.

One final point. Considering the ethical norms of the period in which the novel is written and from which Peyrefitte has not been able completely to insulate himself, considering too the still vigorous, small-minded secrecy in France about the events of 1903 and the decree that the Archives de France tried to impose upon me in 1988, it seems understandable that Peyrefitte chose either to give pseudonyms to a number of persons associated with d'Adelswärd or not to name them at all. He certainly does not give the names of the Parisian schoolboys involved in the scandal; he only notes that in the sentence, reference is made to six boys of whom three were brothers. Strangely, however, earlier in the novel Peyrefitte gives a list of boys - even divided into the schools they
attended! - who might possibly have participated in the events which led up to the trial.\textsuperscript{15} All of these boys, later as adults, played important roles in French society.\textsuperscript{16} I must admit that I do not understand Peyrefitte's intentions. A number of possibilities did occur to me. Did Peyrefitte not wish to give the names of the six boys actually involved in the case, either for ethical reasons or because they never became as famous as the boys he did list? Why did he include the names of boys not directly involved in the case? Was he just trying to magnify the respectability of their pedagogical institutions, or did the reputations of these boys have to be cleaned up, and, if so, why? Were these the names which might be recorded in the dossier but which do not appear in the sentence? One of those on the list, Paul Morand, in his autobiographical \textit{Venises} (1971), recalled d'Adelswärd all too well, and Peyrefitte recently admitted that Morand was one of the more important informants for his novel.\textsuperscript{17} Or was it just another vindictive act, common to many of Peyrefitte's books, listing the names to suggest that these boys had more to do with the affair than appeared?

\textbf{Jacques d'Adelwärd becomes Jacques d'Adelwärd-Fersen}

Of d'Adelwärd's mother, Louise Emilie Alexandrine Vührer (1855-1935), we only know that she came from a Catholic Alsatian family, and that her father, Thomas Michel Alexandre Vührer (c.1817-1886), was a former referendary at the Ministère d'État (Ministry of State), the director of \textit{Le Paris-Journal} and the founder of the Parisian newspaper \textit{Le Soir}.\textsuperscript{18}

![Figure 2 - Cover by Louis Morin](image-url)
On his father's side, his family can be traced back in France to Baron Georges (Göran) Axel d’Adelswärd (1781-1842), a Swedish officer who had been captured by the French in 1806 and imprisoned in Longwy. There he married a daughter of a French notary, Anne Catherine Honorine Bernard (1790-1872), in 1809; according to Peyrefitte, this daughter was the oldest cousin of Count Hans Axel von Fersen (1755-1810). Before 1783, von Fersen, as aide-de-camp to General Rochambeau, fought with the French troops in the American War of Independence; he received the Order of Cincinnatus from George Washington himself. Later, as a diplomat, he raised a storm in Versailles and arranged the escape of the French royal family to Varennes in 1791. He became the personal favorite of the Swedish King Gustavus III (murdered in 1792), his son Gustavus IV (forced to abdicate in 1809), and his successor Charles XIII. He operated as a resident of the University of Uppsala and was made a Swedish field-marshall in 1801. But in 1810, while singing the “Frère Jacques,” he was killed by a mob in Stockholm at the funeral of the new king-elect, Christian of Augustenberg: according to the people, von Fersen was to be blamed for the fact that the new king had suddenly died before his coronation. It is to this same von Fersen that Jacques dedicated his volume of poetry *Chansons Légères* (1901) (figs. 2 & 7) and whose name he later added to his own.

One descendent of the Protestant d’Adelswärd line was Jacques’ grandfather, Renauld Casimir Oscar (Reinhold Casimir Oscar) (1811-1898) (fig. 3), who became a naturalized French citizen in 1832 and married Amélie Steiner (1825-1881) in 1843. After serving in the army, he founded the iron and steel industry in Longwy-Briey, bringing prosperity to the district. In 1848 he was appointed deputy for the Meurthe district in the National Assembly in Paris, where he befriended a deputy from Paris, none other than the famous writer Victor Hugo. After the coup d’état of 1851, he and Hugo briefly shared exile on the island of Jersey. According to Peyrefitte, the only accomplishment of Renauld-Oscar’s son, Axel d’Adelswärd (i.e., Jacques’ father, 1847-1887), was to die at an early age of yellow fever in Panama. The newspaper *Gil Blas*, however, recalled Jacques’ father as a courageous “yachtman” who had sailed “all the seas of the globe.” A few years before, the same newspaper had praised Axel’s generosity for donating a life boat to the Rescue Society of Le Havre: “One of our most endearing yachtmen, Mr. Baron A. d’Adelsward, is going to offer to the Rescue Society of Le Havre a big life boat, which, by a very ingenious system, is to be launched at sea within eight seconds, fully armed and the crew on board. As one sees, those who travel at sea to their amusement do not forget those who go to sea to earn a living, and more than one sailor ows his rescue to the generous yachtman to whom we address our most vivid congratulations.”

![Figure 3 - Renauld-Oscar d’Adelswärd](image-url)
Not much is known about Jacques' early youth. When he was born, his mother was twenty-four (according to Jacques’ birth registration: twenty-three) years old and his father thirty-two; they had been married since May 1879. When his father was still alive (and as far as he was not at sea), he had given Jacques a very rigid education, whereas his mother especially provided for the more tender wants of young Jacques. At the age of seven, Jacques became a half-orphan. Peyrefitte provides us with the name of Jacques’ guardian and friend of the family, Viscount [Elie Marie] Audoin de Dampierre (1846-1909), and mentions pleasant outdoor vacations with his grandfather on Jersey. Jacques found these much more interesting than the long summer days spent within the walls of Herserange, the family castle near Longwy (fig. 4 & 5), days interrupted only occasionally by visits to the steel mills. During one vacation on Jersey, Jacques seems to have had intimate relations with an unidentified blond Eton schoolboy. In the volume Chansons Légères. Poèmes de l'enfance (Light verses: Poems of childhood) his poem, "Treize ans" (Thirteen years old), seems to be dedicated to this youngster, though there is an ambivalence whether it is the poet or (as Timothy d'Arch Smith has suggested) the dedicatee who is thirteen (or both of them). In the same collection Jacques describes in "À Grand-Père" (To Grandfather), the loving but rather remote relationship between himself and his grandfather. Jacques explained the fact that he hardly knew his grandfather by saying that as a boy he was preoccupied with exploring the world around him, catching butterflies, and picking flowers.

Jacques passed the greater part of the year in Paris, part of the time in boarding schools since he was nine, and the rest of the time with his family which, after his father’s death, consisted of his mother, his grandmother Vührer, and two sisters, Germaine Juliette Fernande (1884-1973) and Jeanne Yvonne Marguerite (called “Solange,” 1886-1942). Jacques remembers his little brother Renold, who died young, in a tender in memoriam poem.

In order to counterbalance the exclusively female company, and in order to receive “a more virile education,” for a while Jacques was taken under the wings of his uncle Gustave d’Adelswärd (1843-1895) and his wife, Jeanne-Mathilde d’Adelswärd-de Pourtalès (1854-1934). As an engineer and mechanic, Gustave took an active part in the development of the blast-furnaces in northern France, especially in the Longwy region and at Audun-le-Tiche (Alsace); the 300 coke furnaces at the Tilleur mill (near Liège, in Belgium) were built under his supervision. In addition to this he was a talented painter who regularly contributed to the Parisian Salon du Champ de Mars between 1876 and 1895. He also greatly improved the beer production of Brewery La Comète at Châlons-sur-Marne (Champagne) with an annual output of 70,000 hectolitres (fig. 6).
Jacques' school years were characterized by a most tiresome tour of the very illustrious bulwarks of Parisian education: the Collège Sainte-Barbe-des-Champs, the Collège Sainte-Barbe de Paris, the Lycée Michelet in Vanves, the Lycée Janson-de-Sailly (fig. 8), the Collège Rochefort, and the École Descartes. Sainte-Barbe was chosen by his grandfather because of its noble tradition dating back to 1460. The reason for the rapid change of schools remains unclear. The educational system was probably much the same in all of them; the authoritarian approach could not have varied a great deal. Moreover, he was a pupil of great promise and the winner of several prizes. But he missed his mother's tenderness and he felt lonely. Lack of freedom and the open air, sleepless nights in the silence of the big dormitory, only disturbed by the regular respiration of his little comrades, the interdiction of singing, running, of fatigueing himself, were recurring laments in his letters home. Nancy Erber quotes Jacques' explanation during the trial: that he was called "fille (a girl)" by fellow pupils, and that he was horrified when a schoolmate took him to a brothel, which earned him the nickname "fichu gosse (stupid kid)." Perhaps the best clues of the rapid change of schools lie in Jacques' character. Considering the spirit of the times, he must have seemed a difficult pupil to his fellow pupils and his teachers: he had his own ideas about things, and was
perhaps a bit egocentric, non-conformist, and rebellious against idle authority. He gives a brilliant picture of the boredom of boarding school study hours in the poetry collection *L’Hymnaire d’Adonis* (The Hymnal of Adonis) (1902). This poem also bears the title "Treize Ans":

![Figure 7 - Jacques d’Adelswärd in his teens](image)

**Treize Ans**

Treize ans, blondin aux yeux précoces,
Qui disent le désir et l’émoi,
Lèvres, ayant je ne sais quoi
De mutin, de vicieux, de gosse.

Il lit; dans la salle ils sont
Tous penchés à écrire un thème,
Lui seul dans un coin lit quand même,
Des vers de Musset, polissons;

Le pion passe, vite il se cache,
Semblant travailler avec feu,
À quelque devoir nébuleux,
Très propre, soigné et sans tache,

Puis calmé, le moment d’après,
Reprend tout rose sa lecture,
Se met à changer de posture,
Pour être de l’ombre plus près;
Coule ses mains, sans qu’on devine,
Dans sa poche percée d’un trou,
Et là longuement fait joujou,
Rêveur de voluptés félines!

Thirteen

Thirteen, blond, with knowing eyes,
Flashing restlessness and desire,
Street boys’ lips tinged with
The mischievous, even the vicious.

He is reading: in the study hall
The others are bent, writing an exercise,
He alone, in a corner, reads
Smutty poems by de Musset;

The proctor passes by; quickly he hides himself,
Pretending devoted concentration,
At some nebulous task,
Working properly, neatly, without stains,

Calm again, the moment passed,
Resumes his reading, flushing,
Shifting slowly
To be deeper in shadow;

Slips his hands, unobserved,
Into his pocket pierced by a hole,
And there, for a while, fondles his toy,
Lost dreaming in feline sensualities!

L’Hymnaire d’Adonis, which swarms with young blond boys, contains many poems directly referring to Jacques’ own school years. Were such contacts and meditations as are described in "Crépuscule" (Twilight), "Rêve triste" (Gloomy dream), and "Adieu Mièvre" (Frisky farewell) to have come to light, they would no doubt have led to the immediate expulsion of those involved. I
doubt that this happened in Jacques' case; if it had, Peyrefitte would almost certainly have discovered it.

After initial difficulties with his final examinations, Jacques finally obtained the necessary baccalaureate to go to university. He enrolled at Geneva and there, in 1898, his first publication appeared, *Conte d’Amour* (Tale of love).\(^{35}\) The same year, however, his grandfather died on Jersey, and Jacques was called back to France where he tried to get used to the fact that he had received a rich inheritance.\(^{36}\)

According to Peyrefitte, in the summer of 1901, he went to Sweden to attend the wedding of a prominent relative, Theodor Adelswärd (1860-1929) and his wife, Louise Douglas.\(^{37}\) Probably to his regret, Peyrefitte had overlooked a short notice in *Le Figaro* of June 1901, which states that “the young writer of *Chansons légères*” had been received in private audience at Stockholm by King Oscar II and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alfred Lagerheim, “to whom he had made a present of his volume.”\(^{38}\) Back in Paris, Jacques enrolled in a number of courses without taking any of them very seriously. After his compulsory military service was abridged to ten months (being the son of a widow), he returned to Paris on 20 September 1902 and fell again into a rather directionless existence.

He debated between taking up a career in diplomacy or going into politics, took courses at the École des Sciences Morales et Politiques at Saint-Germain-en-Laye and joined the Royalist Party. He also took courses in law and literature, and a course in experimental psychology at the Salpêtrière in Paris. His urge to show off was temporarily satisfied by the purchase of a royal blue Darracq automobile, driven by a liveried chauffeur.\(^{39}\) But establishing himself as a writer (fig. 9) offered the greatest promise: in the meantime he had published two collections of poems, the above-mentioned *Chansons Légères* (1901) and *L’Hymnaire d’Adonis* (1902). He had also published a miscellaneous volume, *Ébauches et Débauches* (Drafts and dissipations) (1901), and a novel, *Notre-Dame des Mers Mortes* (Our Lady of the Dead Seas) (1902), the fruit of a visit to Venice.\(^{40}\) Meanwhile, he had become a welcome guest in Parisian literary salons: there the ladies, hoping for a casual flirt or merely seeking an ideal son, gushed over the promising but above all
rich young dandy; some probably had never read a word he had written. “Old ladies were very fond of Mr. Adelsward,” Jean Lorrain mockingly observed. A number of his fellow artists, however, expected better things from his young talent.

**Baron Jacques and the Messes Noires of 1903**

In January d'Adelswärd leased a bachelor's apartment at 18 Avenue Friedland, just two doors away from his mother. The building still stands, and above the top floor windows one can read the incised initials "NC." This is not, however, an homage to Jacques' future boy-friend, Nino Cesarini, but simply the logo of the company that constructed the building, the Nationale Compagnie d'Assurances sur la Vie. It is now occupied by several medical specialists (fig. 10). 1903 was the year of Jacques’ friendship with Loulou Locré, a talented fifteen-year-old pupil at the Lycée Carnot, winner of several prizes. Loulou was a class mate of Paul Morand who, in his correspondence with Jacques Chardonne of 1959, recalled his school pal several times: “I had pointed out to the writer [i.e., Peyrefitte] that the just mentioned Loulou, in fact Louis, son of Baron Locré, was a class mate at the Carnot. When I lived on rue Marbeuf, each morning I collected him on rue de Berri, just like Jean Drake del Castillo who lived beyond the street, and together we set off, to the Carnot.”

1903 was also the year of Jacques’ ultimately disastrous association with Albert François de Warren (born in the same year as Jacques’ brother Renold), who appears in Peyrefitte's novel as Hamelin and whose elder brother, René, was knighted by Pope Leo XIII in 1900. It was also the year of serious marriage plans involving Blanche Suzanne Caroline de Maupeou, who came from a respected aristocratic family and whose father was a wealthy Protestant industrialist. Nothing, however, was to come of those plans, for the long arm of the law intervened.

By order of the judge for the pretrial hearings, Charles de Valles, Jacques (fig. 11) was arrested by Messieurs Hamard, chief of the Sûreté, and his deputy Blot on 9 July on suspicion of indecent conduct with minors (figs. 12-13, 15) and offending the public decency. He was brought to the Santé prison for questioning.
The newspapers and magazines were full of the case in the days that followed. Jacques and Albert de Warren were supposed to have held orgies (called Messes Noires – Black Masses – by the press) in their homes twice a week (on Thursday and Sunday), involving countless youngsters from the better circles of society, mostly recruited from Carnot, Chaptal, Condorcet, Janson-de-Sailly, and Saint-Joseph-des-Tuileries schools (figs. 8 & 14). Writing of a confrontation between his father and d'Adelswärd years later in Venice, Paul Morand described how his fellow pupils used to point out Jacques as he waited expectantly outside their school doors.

According to the press and Peyrefitte, the alleged soirées involved the crème de la crème of Parisian high society, including Catholic priests and the writer Achille Éssebac (pseudonym of Henri Louis Achille Bécasse, 1868-1936): many prominent ladies and gentlemen came to gape at
these exhibitionist *tableaux vivants* and *poses plastiques*, called “représentations païennes” (pagan representations), and some of the observers actually participated in them - the much admired courtesan Liane de Pougy, for example, posed as the Callipygian Venus. Nancy Erber quotes the amusing comment by F.V. in the newspaper *Gil Blas*: “Two young Parisian gentlemen who hungered for novelty hosted a series of children’s parties at their home. This attracted the attention of the police. It seems that they were introducing the little schoolboys of our *lycées* to the sort of homework that had only a distant relation to the kind the Education Ministry is recommending. In addition, a certain number of ladies and gentlemen joined in these juvenile pastimes, which certainly must have flattered the children, who always long for adult attention… The principal of the *lycée Carnot* has assured us that in order to protect his charges from being accosted by ‘shady women’ at the end of the school day, he himself patrols the sidewalk outside the establishment. Alas! He hadn’t reckoned on ‘shady men’. ” “Professional ephebes,” young rent boys, seem to have been present too. Erber quotes one of the participants: “We put on pink robes. Sometimes we took them off. Nothing more.”

![Figure 13 – “Two Removals” by František Kupka (1903)](image)

![Figure 14 - Lycée Carnot (1991)](image)

According to Peyrefitte, scandal erupted following a failed blackmail attempt by Jacques' former valet, “Pierre G.” (fig. 16) who demanded 100,000 francs in return for his silence. When Jacques' mother also refused to pay, he went to the police, who at first refused to believe him. However, Pierre's story was confirmed by a certain “Perrin,” a blackmailer arrested by Inspector Roux and who seems to have been an intimate acquaintance of Albert de Warren. A number of schoolboys were shadowed and their activities observed, after which the police stepped in. Forewarned, de Warren had fled to the United States on 27 June (probably from Ostend in Belgium), but d'Adelswärd’s family was forced to retain the famous lawyer, Charles Edgar Demange, who had recently defended the Jewish Captain Alfred Dreyfus.
Figure 15 - “The moral of the lawsuit of the Black Masses. « Daddy, mammy! What did I do to be condemned by you to ten years prison! »” Caricature by Louis Morin (1903)
During his detention, Jacques was examined by three psychiatrists named Notet, Magnan and Vallon who, according to the newspaper Le Matin, diagnosed insanity, alcoholism, and epilepsy inherited from his relatives. Jacques’ grandmother and even his father, Axel, are said to have temporarily been interned in a mental institution – which Jacques’ mother vehemently denied. Vallon described attacks during Jacques’ youth which had brought him to death’s door, causing brain damage which, according to the psychiatrist, condemned him to lead the life of a congenital liar. Vallon even claimed that his residence in various boarding schools had only added to his lack of education in moral hygiene, and the psychiatrist concluded that Jacques had a damaged sense of responsibility.

The newspaper Le Petit Parisien had already passed a different sentence on 16 July: “Strange sensations were explored by the young d’Adelsward far more in order to singularize himself in the eyes of his comrades than out of personal taste. His Baudelairianism was «a pose», and if he made a display of certain vices, it was much less from corruption than from ostentation. He is not a feeble-minded nor a demented, he is a misguided person.”

In August, he was brought to the prison hospital at Fresnes-les-Rungis (perhaps also because the regimen was less severe there) to undergo necessary medical treatment, including a “delicate operation” by Doctor G. Le Filliâtre, surgeon-in-chief of the Prisons de la Seine. It was at this time that he wrote a collection of poems entitled L’Amour enseveli (Love in burial costume), which appeared in Paris a year later.

During Jacques’ stay at the prison hospital - and a dull moment in the press coverage of the scandal - , the editor-in-chief of the newspaper L’Intransigeant, Henri Rochefort, launched a villainous attack imbued with anti-semitism and inaccuracies: “A theft committed by a Jew is no longer a theft, and an act of indecency perpetrated by a Protestant is no longer an act of indecency. (...) Then, suddenly, in all the rags [i.e., newspapers] of the coalition there is a big silence! No
further persecutions against the celebrants of these eccentric masses! Adelsward, at first arrested, has been returned to his family, with excuses, and nowadays you will look in vain for the slightest allusion to this dark incident in the prime Parisian government papers. An inquiry has revealed that the invert in question did not belong to the Catholic faith but to the Protestant, and, moreover, that he was of half-Jewish race by descent. Once this was discovered, the official reptiles were instructed to retain their hissings.\(^{56}\)

Already on 18 July, André Girard, in *Les Temps Nouveaux*, had made a serious analysis of the press coverage of the affair: “When the author or the authors, writing about the scandal, belong to a clerical or a royalist party, there is a rush of all the opposite parties, anti-clerical, republican, socialist, even anarchist, in order to shift all responsibility to the «scum of priesthood», and to the «scum of priesthood» alone. (…) However, it is not their exclusive apanage. And if one deigns to look around, one has to admit that no political party, no social class, even no race – fanatics or not by their particular faith – are exempt of it. Especially the Orient and the Far East do not yield to Europe or America. Oscar Wilde, Flamidien, d’Adelsward are international characters.” Girard emphasized the importance of looking at the more general, more exact causes, more in consonance with the moral and psychological reality of the social facts: “It is too easy to decline responsibility for a criminal aberration and shift it to a political adversary or a person of another opinion.” So, in his opinion, it is ridiculous to blame the Republic and its modern ideas about morality, its public schools, the naturalist and decadent literature, the intellectuals, looking beyond the beaten road. “In the other camp,” he continues, “we perceive the exclusive incrimination of clericalism, and even the affirmation that the unfortunate children of the lycée Carnot, being the victims of the lubricity of aristocratic swines, had received an education by clerics, and that to this education one has to attribute the facility with which they [the children] have submitted to the practices one knows. To Drumont, on the contrary, these children are little Jews!” Girard rightly concludes: “So, make up your mind about the opinion of the newspapers!” Already from its start, the press coverage of the affair had become a mirror of the tripartite crisis France was plunged into at the time: the controversies between Church and State, between Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards, and between exploiters and the exploited.\(^{57}\)

On 17 October d’Adelswärd was returned to the Santé. According to Peyrefitte, Albert de Warren, accompanied by his brother, René, and his counsel, Maître Henri-Robert, voluntarily appeared before Judge de Valles on the same day; de Warren was arrested on the spot and brought to the Santé.\(^{58}\) The next days de Warren pleaded for his innocence: he had never been a crimp of d’Adelswärd nor assisted at “scenes of debauchery” at Avenue Friedland. During a confrontation with d’Adelswärd at de Valles’ office, both de Warren and d’Adelswärd played into each other’s hands by protecting each other and denying all the accusations.\(^{59}\)

The trial began on 28 November in the ninth chamber of the Tribunal de la Seine headed by Judge Bondoux, the court having decided that the proceedings would be held in camera. On 3 December the prosecution lawyer, Lescouvé, outlined the case for the prosecution followed by the statements for the defense by Demange and Henri-Robert. On the same day a guilty verdict was handed down: having already served five months d’Adelswärd was set free that evening. Albert de Warren stayed in prison and appealed to a higher court.\(^{60}\)

Considering that the trial was held in camera, it is easy to understand why comparatively so little was reported about it in the press. Grandgousier, in the republican newspaper *Le Matin*, Marréaux Delavigne, in *Le Journal*, and other journalists had to squirm to fill several columns with pieces on “noble deeds” discussed behind closed doors; deeds, which, according to *Le Figaro*, consisted for the greater part of “impudicities of the dormitories, continued after boarding school.”\(^{61}\)

It must be observed that the court did not wish to deal with the charge of “offending public decency.” The case was restricted to “inciting minors to debauchery,” illegal conduct between a number of boys and two young men in their twenties, thus averting the widening of the case and the likelihood that steps would have had to be taken against other, perhaps older, participants.
Moreover, according to the sentence, “indecent behaviour” was cited with only six minors: Berecki, Boesch, Locré, and the three brothers Adalbert, Jacques, and René Croisé de Pourcelet, sons of a Parisian engineer of whom the oldest was fourteen – minors, of whom Renard asked himself in *Gil Blas*: “and these children, weren’t they of the kind that only wants to be «excited»?” (fig. 17). In so doing, it was probably hoped that the affair could be contained and above all the public’s appetite for sensation dampened.

Figure 17 - First page of the sentence

Whether this was indeed the intention of the court, or whether, as Peyrefitte suggests (following the defense of Maître Henri-Robert), this was the wish of other and more important people, the attempt failed. The degree to which the name d’Adelswärd-Fersen still stirs the public imagination is a result not of his literary output but rather of the fabrications circulated about him from 1903.
onwards. In 1904, for example, three years before Peyrefitte was born, the pornographer Alphonse Gallais, using the transparent pseudonym of Doctor A.-S. Lagail, brought out a strange book entitled *Les Mémoires du Baron Jacques: Lubricités infernales de la noblesse décadente*, in which he set out to kill two birds with one stone. As often in Gallais' books, the nobleman was one target of satire, and this time homosexuality was the other. The writer of these apocryphal memoirs obviously had little affinity for, or experience with, the sexuality of children; whenever there is an opportunity, his frame of reference is the (hetero)sexual behavior of adults. But the real purpose of the book is to allow the author to cast aspersions on every one around Jacques: he had intimate relations with Oscar Wilde, Pierre Loti, and Jean Lorrain; he had an incestuous relationship with his mother who took his virginity at an early age; Jacques, in turn, deflowered a number of young boys upon the skeleton of his own mother. The piece ends with Jacques' death in the prison hospital at Fresnes as a result of "a delicate operation on his anus." The book also contains a poem of 14 stanzas with 8 lines each, entitled "Notre-Dame des Verges Fortes" (Our Lady of the sturdy cocks), a word play on Jacques' novel, *Notre-Dame des Mers Mortes*, of 1902. The poem is dedicated "to my friends de Barden (de Warren) and La Lorraine (Lorrain)." It is not surprising that this small book was condemned in the Cour d'Assises de la Seine on 11 October 1913. A few years later the author tried to resurrect it: using the pseudonym Grimaudin d'Echafa, he republished the material in Chapter Four ("Chez le Baron d'Alderswald") of his *Passions de Femmes. Roman vécu de moeurs féminines et autres. Luxures orgiaques et ordurières. Livre III.* Obviously the public way in which the affair had been reported provided a rich source of nourishment for this kind of pulp.

Of course, there were comments from higher literary levels too. In a letter to his brother, Pierre Louÿs condemned d'Adelswärd in private; Paul Léautaud talked with the diseased Marcel Schwob about the affair, and Laurent Tailhade, a bisexual poet and polemic journalist, denounced Jacques' conduct in his *Lettre familière* of 16 July 1903. In the salon of Madame Marguerite de Pierrebourg, Marcel Proust had defended Jacques: when Paul Hervieu, member of the Académie Française, had cursed the "homosexual Adelsward" and had pleaded for the wrath of Themis, the goddess of Justice, Proust had contradicted him. He pleaded for compassion, and, modifying the dictum about religion of the Prussian King Frederick II, he insisted upon the right of every one to love in his own way. This reminds us of the end of Charles-Louis Philippe's plea of tolerance, "Le Mouton à cinq pattes," in the issue of July/August of *Le Canard Sauvage*: "each passion is right, great and normal, because it exists." In the same issue, Alfred Jarry, the famous and notorious homosexual author of *Ubu roi*, took d'Adelswärd under his protection in his ironical contribution, "L'Âme ouverte à l'Art antique." The most extensive comment came from the previously-mentioned homosexual writer, Jean Lorrain (pseudonym of Paul Alexandre Martin Duval, 1856-1906). In his *Pelléastres: Le Poison de la littérature*, his tirade against what he termed bad taste in literature, he devoted many pages to d'Adelswärd. His description of *Messes Noires* reads like an eye-witness account; it is not unlikely that he was present at some of the gatherings, even though he disliked d'Adelswärd, and Peyrefitte expressly states that Lorrain had not been invited. Taken in context, it would seem that we are dealing with a literary settling of accounts. Here are two people perceived by the outside world as "friends" but who in fact lived in nearly separate worlds: a homosexual who worshiped at the shrine of muscle-bound sailors and similar types, and an aristocratic French "Uranian," hankering after loyal intimacy with the companions of his youth. Lorrain's descriptions of d'Adelswärd are telling: not only is Jacques a "snob." but above all "puerile" and "pitiful." In Lorrain's opinion, the *Messes Noires* do not deserve such a label because they had nothing in common with the Black Masses of Joris-Karl Huysmans, Abbé Guibourg, or Gilles de Rais. Besides, Lorrain added with a sneer, one cannot expect a Protestant ever to make a convincing parody of the Catholic mass.

According to him, the *Messes Noires* were nothing more than ordinary literary salons held on Avenue Friedland which degenerated into "banal" costume parties with d'Adelswärd at the center (are we supposed to think here of similar gatherings at the home of the German poet Stephan
The most shocking and, in light of Lorrain's personal preferences, "pitiful" thing which occurred during one of the gatherings was the appearance of "an adolescent, stark naked, lying on a white bearskin, his body covered with golden gauze, his forehead crowned with roses and his arms resting on a skull of polished ivory" (fig. 18).  

Was this the "indecency" for which Jacques was condemned? Peyrefitte's description in *L'Exilé de Capri*, based largely upon Lorrain's report, gives us no further information; at the point where the reader might want clarification, the boys disappear behind a screen of discretion, in this case into the bathroom. What follows is one of the strongest passages in the novel; unfettered by details, the writer skillfully uses suggestion to draw the reader to one conclusion: "It" happened in the bathroom. But what actually took place in that bathroom?

When Peyrefitte came to write his memoirs, *Propos Secrets*, the screen of discretion came down. Pity for Jacques' family had prevented him from detailing in 1959 what he already knew: Jacques followed the boys, who were stimulated by the tableaux, to the bathroom and masturbated them.

After all the build-up, this revelation is not terribly spectacular. Peyrefitte, however, submitted that his information came from the declarations of those involved, such as can be found in the court documents. Peyrefitte claimed that a copy of the relevant dossier had been given him by "an important magistrate" through a lawyer, a certain Marcel Mirtil. Upon questioning, the Director of the Archives de France assured me three times that no outsider had ever taken the dossier out of the archive, nor inspected it. What then of Peyrefitte's claim? The simplest explanation would be that one of the two parties was lying. I consider this the least likely alternative. If Peyrefitte had wanted to invent, he would have provided us with a more spectacular climax; and one cannot really expect the director of an archive to know the precise history of all the documents in his care. There is always the chance of a leak; some unscrupulous employee could have been bribed to make a clandestine copy of "Top Secret" material. A duplicate of the dossier might have come into the

Figure 18 - “Messe noire” by Manuel Orazi (1903)
hands of the defense lawyer, Demange, and his copy might have been the one obtained by Peyrefitte.\textsuperscript{71}

Another aspect of the case has to be cleared up, one which is referred to neither in the sentence nor in Peyrefitte's novel: newspapers reported that during the police search of d'Adelswärd's apartment a number of pornographic photos were seized - \textit{Le Matin} wrote of "sadistic photos." It was suspected that the photos had been made by a certain "Tr...," an amateur photographer and brother-in-law of de Warren, a regular guest at the Black Masses. Upon Jacques’ arrest, Tr., or Anselme Trilles, seemed to have disappeared. However, the next day he presented himself at the office of \textit{Le Matin} in order to deny the allegations, showing the photos the police had come across in his studio at the Boulevard Pereire, and claiming that he had never been present at the séances. \textit{Le Temps} reported that the police found only sports photos when they searched the photographer's atelier. According to Nancy Erber, obscene photos were also found in de Warren’s apartment (which is incorrect), and, during the trial, Jacques admitted the possession of pornographic photos, which he had also shown to the boys: “I considered them artistic. That’s why I displayed them openly in my home.”\textsuperscript{72}

\textbf{Lord Lyllian}

There is another source which might provide us with some clarification of the events leading up to the trial, a novel written by d'Adelswärd in Ceylon and Capri in 1904 and published in 1905, entitled \textit{Lord Lyllian}. \textit{Messes Noires} (fig. 19). Oddly enough it was dedicated to the \textit{juge d'instruction}, that is to the judge for pretrial hearings. One of his strongest works, it consists of an astonishing mixture of fact and fiction. Only the last quarter of it deals with the affair of 1903; the remainder we must consider Jacques' apologia. It is a book full of mirrors and masks (much of it takes place in Venice) in which a layman, perhaps even a judge, must get lost. Maybe that is why the Dutch writer and essayist, Gerrit Komrij, even though he made a good attempt to unravel its mysteries, called it a "deafening mistake."\textsuperscript{73}

\begin{figure}[h]
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\caption{Figure 19 - Cover by Claude Simpson}
\end{figure}
First of all, there is considerable juggling with names. When the reference is to more or less contemporary events, the players assume their real names: Huysmans, Barrès, King Louis of Bavaria. With those of d'Adelswärd's circle, and as events become more and more fantastic, the names take on their own masks: the German industrialist Supp (Friedrich Alfred Krupp), Sar Baladin (Sâr Mériodack = Josipéh Péladan), Montautrou ("the arse climber" = Robert de Montesquiou), Achille Patrac (Achille Essebac = Achille Bécasse), the painter Chignon (Édouard Chimot), Claude Skrimpton (Claude Simpson). Albert de Warren becomes Guy de Payen. The hero lives on Avenue d'Iéna (Friedland), and we can recognize Inspector Roux in the police officer Pioux. Jean Lorrain appears repeatedly as the chatter-box and sexual match-maker, Jean d'Alsace (probably a literary application of the Alsace-Lorraine conflict), who on one occasion even forgets his wig.

The main character is Renold Howard Evelyn Monrose, Lord of Lyllian Castle in Scotland who at the age of seventeen lost his parents: first his adulterous mother and then his tender loving father. Following a tender puppy-love affair with a fourteen-year-old girl, the young orphan falls into the clutches of Harold Skilde (Oscar Wilde), the writer of The Portrait of Miriam Green (The Picture of Dorian Gray, of course). Skilde falls in love with the innocent youth, but perverts him and turns him into a simultaneous reincarnation of Adonis, Heliogabalus, and Narcissus. Countless men and women, mostly older, court him and bind him to serve their sexual needs. Following the suicide of one of his female worshippers during a night-time erotic performance by the Lord in the ruins of a Greek temple, he breaks off his relations with Skilde, who is immediately arrested in England and sentenced to "hard labour." Komrij rightly points out parallels between Lord Lyllian and Lord Alfred Douglas. Chapter Nine even begins with a letter from Skilde to Lord Lyllian which seems a paraphrase of Wilde's De Profundis even though this work was only published by Robert Ross in abbreviated version in 1905.74

After protracted wanderings through Europe, filled with memories of his innocent youth and his loving father; after a number of new conquests (which he takes as his due) and the accompanying ennui; and after a short-term love affair with a Gypsy girl in Venice and a "true love" romance with the young Swedish poet Axel Ansen (who unfortunately dies young), Lord Lyllian finally settles down in Paris. There follows the well-known story resulting in the Messes Noires, though d'Adelswärd's perspective is that of the sensation-hungry public. All the ingredients are there: the schoolboys arrive (Lyllian's "choirboys"); a naked boy lies on an altar and is bedecked with white roses and black lilies, a skull in his hand; Lord Lyllian worships in front of him on his knees while reciting poetry. There even follows a scene in which a sword-wielding Lyllian chases a little boy. Someone in the public asks, "Is it true that he cuts the children's throats?" The writer's comment is short but crushing: Black Masses are the ease-loving substitutes of those who lack the capacity to be Rosicrucians!75

Lord Lyllian has previously informed us that he only wanted to raise the ethical and aesthetic consciousness of the schoolboys and expose them to good poetry (Byron and Verlaine). He would guide them to experience the magnificent, consoling character of love and so stimulate them into seeking a deserving comrade with whom they would not be ashamed and could share the excitement of discovering life, beauty, and tenderness.76 In the end Lord Lyllian betrays the boys; he renounces boy-love and abandons his friends to throw himself into the arms of his ultimate love - a young girl of noble birth. The hero is asked to justify himself by one of the schoolboys, André Lazeski (the young Berecki from the sentence),77 and is subsequently killed in a mêlée. The boy also dies in the fight. The novel is a breathtaking mixture of truth and fiction providing some new information about pedagogical eros. Where the book is of exceptional value is in casting new light on the writer himself, his character, and his artistry. D'Adelswärd appears in the novel in at least four guises, and he even lets them carry on love affairs with each other. Most important, of course, is the decadent Lord Lyllian. He is offset by the chaste Renold (the name of d'Adelswärd's brother who died
young). But he is also the sly old diplomat d'Herserange who bears the name of the d'Adelswärd family castle. Renold loses his chastity when he discovers his own body in a mirror; d'Herserange tries to manipulate Lord Lyllian to serve his sexual needs. The fourth is an artist of his own age, Axel Ansen, with whom Lord Lyllian is only able to exchange a single kiss before the poet dies. When Lyllian tells the story to d’Herserange, he realizes that this young man was the first person in his life who loved him without reservation. Axel, of course, was the first name of d'Adelswärd's father. This is sufficient, I believe, to demonstrate the complexity of the novel, which is a virtually unique manifestation of narcissism. We can rightly conclude, I think, that the early deaths of his little brother Renold and his father placed an ineradicable stamp upon the character of the young Jacques d'Adelswärd.

The Dossier d’Instruction of 1903

In 2003 I finally got the opportunity to consult the dossier of the Archives de France. At first glance, it seemed a complete mess! It took some time to restore the chronological order of the documents included. The dossier consists of 24 documents in handwriting, from several authorities, and covers the period of 10 July 1903 to 21 January 1904; especially the orthography of names turns out to be rather sloppy.

Included are two letters concerning de Warren’s appeals, and some correspondence between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French General Consul at New York about the whereabouts of de Warren. There are some instructions to the police and notes of observations during the investigation; short notices about the findings in d’Adelswärd’s and de Warren’s homes during the police search, and statements by Blanche’s father, the Viscount de Maupeou, and the father of the Croisé de Pourcelet boys. Two documents refer to d’Adelswärd’s mental and physical examinations, but most of the dossier consists of résumés of interrogations. Of course, there were interviews with d’Adelswärd himself and some of the boys involved, including several rent boys. D’Adelswärd’s door-keeper, Alfred Adam, was also interviewed, as well as Jacques’ chauffeur, Bernedat, his former valet, Velpry, and the valet of his mother, Médard (the latter not included in the dossier). What do these documents add to our investigations so far?

On 2 August 1903, the French General Consul at New York, de Magny, informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, that de Warren and his brother had arrived on the steamer “Touraine” in New York on 4 July, traveling with the pseudonym Rossen because their name had also been divulged in the American press coverage of the scandal; they had departed for Liverpool and Queenstown on the steamer “Oceanic” on 29 July, using the name Fernando. From a letter of the Tribunal de la Seine of 10 July (appendix by the juge d’instruction, Charles de Valles), it appears that Jacques had been forewarned too! That is why he had stopped all the gatherings and the reception of youngsters at his home, and why he had fixed his engagement at an earlier date, intending to set out on a journey with Blanche and her family on 11 July.

The story about the failed blackmail attempt by Jacques’ former valet “Pierre G...” (whose real name was Velpry) was probably invented by Peyrefitte. Velpry told de Valles about the frequentations of d’Adelswärd’s apartment by the brothers Croisé de Pourcelet, from April 1903 onwards: after their departure, he had found obscene photos, left on the table, and handkerchiefs stained with sperm; he had informed Jacques’ mother about the situation, and had quit his job because he had become the laughing-stock of all domestics in the house, who knew of Jacques’ moral conduct.

On the contrary, it appears that Jacques had been blackmailed by several rent boys. During the investigations, three letters were discovered, one of them addressed to the Viscount de Maupeou, who received it just a few moments before Jacques’ arrest. When the viscount informed de Valles about the letter, he also expressed his joy about the fact that the family had received the revelations concerning Jacques before the marriage. The dossier does not reveal the name(s) of the
blackmailer(s); the name “Perrin” is not mentioned at all. However, most close in pronunciation there is the name of Béret, a comrade of the fifteen-year-old rent boy [Fernand] Boscher. Maybe Peyrefitte mixed up this name with the name of Béchet, a close friend of de Warren. In the dossier, we can find the names of six rent boys, with whom d’Adelswärd had sexual contacts: Béret, Boscher, twenty-one-year-old Kothé, Lefebvre, nineteen-year-old Leroy, and fifteen-year-old Verguet. Boscher declared that in March he had been hauled up from the boulevards and had been taken in Jacques’ automobile to Avenue Friedland; he had spent the night with d’Adelswärd, he had been masturbated and Jacques had oral sex with him too; the next day he had introduced his comrade, Béret, to Jacques. Kothé and Leroy also gave detailed information (not included in the dossier) about their sexual contacts with d’Adelswärd. It was probably from these contacts that he had caught several venereal diseases. During the physical examination of Jacques, the prison doctor, Socquet, diagnosed scabies, gonorrhoea and soft ulcer, which needed immediate medical treatment; Socquet spoke about a “deplorable pathological condition.” His diagnosis elicited the satirical poem “Terza rima d’Adonis galeux” (Terza-rima of scabby Adonis) by Louis Marsolleau in *Gil Blas; Le Matin* revealed that de Valles and his clerk “never omit to visit a bathing establishment at the end of the day” to prevent any contagion. Jacques himself told de Valles that, after his military service in Charleville and Sedan, his former camp comrade, Édouard Chimot, engraver from Lille, had introduced him to the professional ephebes of the streets and other public spots. The germ of his “depravations” had to be traced back to the reading of licentious literature, and to the bad company of fellow pupils at the Collège Sainte-Barbe, the Lycées Michelet and Janson-de-Saillly, and the École Descartes; at the age of twelve he had learned everything from the elder boys. A relative and female friend of de Warren, Madame d’Aubusson, had encouraged Jacques to organize gatherings, such as were described in his *L’Hymnaire d’Adonis*, and in the books of Achille Essebac, Jean Lorrain, and Joséphine Péladan. Jacques told de Valles about the previously-mentioned *Messe Noire* described by Jean Lorrain. It took place at Avenue Friedland on 17 or 18 May. After the recitation of Baudelaire’s “La Mort des amants” (The Death of the lovers) from *Les Fleurs du mal*, and at the sounds of a funeral march, the guests defiled along the *tableau vivant* of “Youth and Death”: a skull amidst flowers and lights, and a nude fourteen-year-old boy, lying on the floor, his sex covered with a scarf. Jacques emphasized that the gathering had not a licentious character, nor the soirée in March and other mundane afternoon parties; moreover, college boys had not been present. Rent boy Kothé, who assisted at some of the gatherings, testified that usually three fourths of the guests consisted of pederasts known to him. The dossier only mentions two names of regular guests: Count Guy d’Harasat d’Echegoyen and Abbé Marin. According to the newspaper *Le Petit Parisien*, to de Valles’ disappointment, a lot of boys did not appear for interrogation. In order to prevent uncomfortable situations, they had been sent by their parents to the countryside “on accelerated vacation,” without leaving any notice of their sojourn. As to the schoolboys who did appear, it must first be observed that the names of boys “not directly involved in the case” (from Peyrefitte’s above-mentioned list) do not occur in the dossier. There is a list of schoolboys (as an appendix of a letter from the Tribunal de la Seine of 13 July 1903), which, compared with the remainder of the dossier, is incomplete. From all the documents in the dossier, one can compose the following list of schoolboys involved: Besnard (a young comrade of André Berecki and probably a son of the painter Paul-Albert Besnard), Raoul Clerc (a special friend of de Warren), Ramo-Braga, and a pupil of the “classe de rhétorique” (no schools mentioned). From the École Saint-Joseph-des-Tuileries, about seventeen-year-old Starcelli. From the Lycée Carnot: seventeen-year-old André Berecki, son of the General Municipal Secretary of the XVIIIth Arrondissement; fourteen-year-old Henri Boesch; fourteen-year-old Adalbert and Jacques Croisé de Pourcelet, and their younger brother, René (seven or eight years old); two brothers Jacquet (about fourteen years old); a boy de Laguerre; Loulou Locré; and a boy Ménard, son of Doctor Saint-Yves Ménard.
Most of the boys were introduced to d’Adelswärd by Albert de Warren (fig. 20), who hauled them up in the Parc Monceau, in the vicinity of the Lycée Carnot. The boys were treated to light meals, with fancy cakes and liqueurs, to poetry, and rides in Jacques’ automobile. Sometimes Jacques picked the boys up at their school door; occasionally accompanied by de Warren, at which time both of them, clearly being the subject of conversation of almost every one, were pointed out by a flock of other pupils.

From the declarations of the boys we can infer that most of them did not attend d’Adelswärd’s soirées; they mostly visited him alone, or in couples, or met him at de Warren’s home (at first at 12 Rue Desrenaudes and later at 27 Avenue Mac-Mahon). Acts of mutual masturbation between them and Jacques, were reported by André Berecki and the brothers Adalbert and Jacques Croisé de Pourcelet; both brothers testified that d’Adelswärd had performed oral sex on them as well. Saying that he was a collector, d’Adelswärd had made a drawing of Adalbert’s penis; and Henri Boesch declared that d’Adelswärd had measured his sex in a toilet, in the presence of the brothers Adalbert and Jacques. Especially Adalbert seems to be omnipresent in the dossier: when on 12 June d’Adelswärd and de Warren picked up a fourteen-year-old boy at the Lycée Carnot, they drove to a confectioner’s shop at the Avenue de Villiers; there, as by chance, Adalbert turned up as well. It also seems that there was an erotic correspondence between d’Adelswärd and Jacques Croisé de Pourcelet; the latter received d’Adelswärd’s letters and post cards, under the initials J.C.P., poste restante at the office on the Rue Jouffroy. His brother René, who emerges from the dossier as a precocious young boy, testified that d’Adelswärd only once had touched his fly (which the accused denied).

René declared that once or twice he had masturbated himself, after he had learned how to do it from the continuous conversations of his brothers about the subject in de Warren’s home, and after he had caught his brothers in the act. In the same document, de Warren is accused of having masturbated Jacques (who was thirteen at that time) in front of his brother Adalbert. Of course, the boys’ father was furious when he was informed about the attacks on the virtue of his over-
enthusiast sons. He threatened d’Adelswärd with violence, and yelled that he would find de Warren and kill him, if he was not arrested by the police. Hamard, the chief of the Sûreté, and de Valles had to do their utmost to appease him.\textsuperscript{95} In a document of 10 October 1903, de Valles observed that d’Adelswärd and de Warren had used no violence to the boys.\textsuperscript{96} Regarding Jacques’ physical condition, it is strange that there is no sign of concern about the health of the boys in the dossier; however, the press noted that the “children involved” had been examined by doctor Socquet, and that he had not found “any contamination.”\textsuperscript{97}

Compared with the sentence, there is something odd about the dossier. There is no résumé of an interrogation of Loulou Locré! In a document from the Tribunal de la Seine of 12 July 1903, the boy is once mentioned (spelled as “Locret”),\textsuperscript{98} by the brothers Adalbert and Jacques, as a regular visitor of d’Adelswärd, whereas in the sentence (and in Peyrefitte’s novel) he plays a prominent part. From this document one cannot possibly understand why Loulou Locré should be mentioned in the sentence as a victim. However, the same document states that “Locret, Boesch, de Laguerre, Starcelli, and a pupil of the rhétorique” will be interviewed tomorrow. Unfortunately, there is no document concerning these interviews!\textsuperscript{99} Has it been removed from the dossier? There is a small indication that this might be the case: on the original jacket of the dossier, there is a note “24 pièces” (24 pieces); the note is in a recent handwriting. I am afraid, that we have to conclude that the dossier is incomplete. I do not dare to think of what else is missing...

According to Paul Morand, Loulou participated in d’Adelswärd’s “saturnales” (saturnalia), and he had told his friends, “to their astonishment,” that he had gone for dinner with d’Adelswärd in a private cabinet.\textsuperscript{100} More information about Loulou Locré seems to have oozed into the press. During the long hearing by de Valles of 16 July, a number of Jacques’ intimate friends were interviewed; all of them had frequented Avenue Friedland and now, “unanimously and in a touching way,” defended “their former benefactor”: “youngsters with pale faces, their eyes rimmed with bistre.” One of them, named “L…,” is given special attention. According to \textit{Le Petit Parisien} he had almost become d’Adelswärd’s heir. One day, when ether and morphine had turned Jacques’ head more than usually, he is said to have addressed the boy: “Come… let’s flee together… I give you half of my fortune… heavy rings I will bestow upon your fingers… and we are going to die near the lagoon, in Venice…”\textsuperscript{101} During the trial, the relationship between Jacques and “L…” received special attention too. Jacques did not deny their relationship, but emphasized that he was not the initiator. In \textit{Le Petit Parisien} “L…” is described as “this child, which, in spite of its tender age, has succumbed to the peak of perversity, judging from the style of its letters.”\textsuperscript{102}

Are we really dealing with fifteen-year-old Loulou Locré? This is unlikely, for both the newspapers \textit{Le Matin} and \textit{Le Temps} classified the boy, though “still a minor,” as one of the “professionnels” (rent boys). \textit{Gil Blas}, \textit{Le Matin} and \textit{Le Rappel} even mentioned his nicknames: “Pompadour” or “Albert (or: Robert) de Rothschild.” What about other candidates? Rent boy Leroy can be left out of consideration, I think, because he was nineteen. However, rent boy Lefebvre might be a serious alternative, since the \textit{Dossier d’Instruction} does not mention his age. \textit{Le Petit Parisien} states that “L…” was a sixteen-year-old boy; \textit{L’Aurore}, \textit{Gil Blas} and \textit{Le Rappel} added that he was a former waiter of a Parisian restaurant.\textsuperscript{103}

\textbf{The Years of Exile}

Immediately upon his release, on 3 December 1903, Jacques tried to make amends for his past. He appeared with bouquet in hand at the door of his fiancée, Blanche de Maupeou, intending to explain all, but was sent away by a servant without a chance to speak with her. In despair, he decided to end his life with a bullet in the head, but his attempt failed.\textsuperscript{104} No longer feeling welcome in the Parisian salons, he decided to join the French Colonial Forces. That came to nothing because of his delicate health and because the Ministry of War had referred him to the Foreign Legion: Jacques could not “persuade himself to accept living together with people of a bad reputation as proposed
companions.” Peyrefitte’s version is that his rank would have been that of a common soldier because of his jail sentence.¹⁰⁵

Although Jacques’ mother had tried to extenuate the case in July as “ce petit incident” (this small incident) or “petites affaires” (small affairs), and had remarked to de Valles: “Come on! For some amusement with vicious children!... Is this really so grave?...” Jacobs could not expect any longer the support from his family, and so there was no choice for him but to leave France. His aunt, Jeanne, suggested that he go to Sweden, but Adolf Adelswärd (1862-1931) (fig. 21), a remote kinsman of Jacques and military attaché of Sweden and Norway in France, did not like the idea: Jacques should be “exported (i.e., sent) to America or Australia where, if he was willing to rehabilitate himself, he could get a position with a newspaper or something like that.”¹⁰⁷

Precisely why Jacques established himself on Capri is not known. Many writers point to the long history of the island, from its beginnings with the supposed orgies in Villa Jovis of the Roman Emperor Tiberius. Others point to the fact that Marquis Donatien Alphonse de Sade and Lord Alfred Douglas (after Wilde’s trial in 1895) had both fled there, and this cannot be excluded as a motivation. However, I believe there were more practical considerations: Jacques knew Capri from vacations during his adolescence; he was thus probably aware of the existence of its international colony of artists and expatriates which might have seemed at that moment his only safe haven, a place where he could build a new life, and, moreover, which he could use as a stage to profile himself. Jacques appears in the writings of a number of authors who lived and worked there: in the memoirs of the English writer Norman Douglas, Looking Back (1933), and in his novel South Wind (1917); in the memoirs of Edward Frederic Benson; and in the novels Vestal Fire (1927) and Extraordinary Women. Theme and Variations (1928) by Compton Mackenzie, who stages d’Adelswärd as the dandy, Count Robert (Bob) Marsac Lagerström. The American author Edward Irenaeus Prime-Stevenson (better known with his pseudonym, Xavier Mayne), who lived for many years in Italy, stages d’Adelswärd as the protagonist, Dayneford, of his story “Out of the Sun”

Jacques took up residence in the Hotel Quisisana and soon purchased land in the small valley of Unghia Murana on a hill opposite the ruins of Tiberius’ palace. He commissioned his friend Édouard Chimot to design a villa and hired a local contractor to build it (fig. 22). As the time drew near for construction to begin, in February he departed with friends from Naples to the Far East to visit, among other places, Ceylon (Sri Lanka). He worked on Lord Lyillian during that trip; at the same time he began Le Sourire aux yeux fermés (The smile with closed eyes) which is imbued with Hinduism and the further acquaintance with opium. He returned, via the United States, to Capri in the autumn of 1904, residing temporarily in the Villa Certosella which, according to Peyrefitte, he filled with orchids, oriental perfumes, jewels, ebony furniture, bronze and copper objects, and "suitcases full of opium." He also hired three Caprian boys to help him in the house and garden.

After his return to Capri he had to flee temporarily to escape the wrath of the islanders who blamed d’Adelswärd when a local worker was killed by an accident during the construction of Villa Lysis. In Rome he met a fourteen-year-old construction worker selling newspapers, Nino Cesarini, who immediately stole his heart. Jacques sounded out the boy’s family and obtained their permission to take Nino with him as his secretary. The two of them were greeted with understandable suspicion on Capri. Nino, especially, was a problem: not because he was a boy but because he was from Rome and not from Capri.

In the spring of 1905 they visited Sicily, according to Peyrefitte to make a pilgrimage to the grave of the German poet Count August von Platen Hallermünde (1796-1835) in Syracuse and to visit the photographer Baron Wilhelm von Gloeden (1856-1931) in Taormina. Both visit and pilgrimage are possible, even probable, but I can find no documentary evidence of either, nor for a meeting, later, between Jacques and Kuno von Moltke and Philipp zu Eulenburg-Hertefeld. In Taormina d’Adelswärd began his novella, Une Jeunesse (A youth), which, together with Le Baiser de Narcisse (The Kiss of Narcissus), appeared in 1907. Le Baiser, dedicated to Germain Wenzel and
in the opinion of the writer Rachilde really a minor masterpiece which deserved the Prix Goncourt, must be considered a failure; it is hopelessly mired in its own classical allusions: the principal character, Milès, even drowns in his own mirror image! The plot of *Une Jeunesse* revolves around the twenty-three-year-old French painter, Robert Jélaine (fig. 23), who is in love with Nino, a sixteen-year-old seminary student. The couple's antagonists are Father Seraphino, also in love with Nino, and a girl, Michaëla, whom Nino loves. Ultimately, the girl dies and Nino decides to become a priest. The novella is dedicated to "N[ino]. C[esarini]. More beautiful than the Roman light."
The construction of the villa was finally completed in July: it was handed over by the contractor, and Nino was invited to put in place the stone with the inscription “In the year MCMV this villa was constructed by Jacques Count [sic] Adelswärd Fersen and dedicated to the youth of love” (fig. 24). In the autumn they made a short visit to Paris to deliver the manuscript of the poetry volume, *Le Danseur aux Caresses* (The caressing dancer), which was published the following year. They probably went directly from there to Oxford where *Une Jeunesse* was completed in 1906. Back on Capri, Jacques took a fourth Caprian boy into service in order to depart immediately with Nino on a long journey to China. Towards the beginning of 1907, both returned to Italy, Jacques enriched with a collection of 300 opium pipes which he had assembled in China.

The years 1907 and 1908 seem in all respects to have marked a crisis in d'Adelswärd's life. In any case, he found it necessary to restore contact with his family; he visited his sister Germaine, who in the meantime (October 1906) had married the Marquis Alfredo Maria Sergio Gaspare Melchiore Baldassarre Capece Minutolo di Bugnano, a young member of parliament from Naples.113 He invited his sisters and his mother to visit his new home on Capri, during which time Nino was temporarily installed elsewhere. Now seventeen, the boy was in Jacques' eyes in the full glory of his youthful bloom. Such beauty needed preservation, and Jacques commissioned a number of artists to immortalize him. Nino's portrait was painted by Umberto Brunelleschi (1879-1949), a young artist from Pistoia who was making an international furore and liked the company of "young poets." The sculptor Francesco Ierace (1854-1937) from Polistena, whose atelier was now in Naples and who had in the meantime achieved national fame, cast Nino's image in bronze after photos (c. 1906) by Guglielmo Plüschow (1852-1930), a cousin of Baron Wilhelm von Gloeden. A new painting of Nino (c. 1908) (fig. 25) was also executed by the German homosexual painter Paul Höcker (1854-1910), professor of the Academy of Arts at Munich and co-founder of the “Munich Secession,” who had been forced to leave Germany because of a sexual scandal. The photo of Nino on the terrace of Villa Lysis (fig. 26) dates from about this time. The boy is wearing a toga, with a diadem around his head and in his left hand is holding a small Nike on a globe, symbols traditionally associated with the power of Roman gods and emperors.114

Nino's attractiveness smote others as well. During a visit to Venice, Jacques was roaming about the Square of San Marco (where he met Paul Morand and his father), whereas Nino flirted with Alexandrine (Sacha) Ricoy Antokolsky, who found Nino so much to her taste that she even followed him to Capri and eventually seduced him. It almost seems a compensation of the Parisian schoolboys for the felony of Lord Lyllian. Jacques reacted furiously in a volume of poetry appropriately entitled *Ainsi chantait Marsyas* (So sang Marsyas), an exalted song of praise to his Nino who he felt was about to leave him. "How many tears must it take to wash away her kisses?" he asked in the poem "Ce matin, tu dormais comme un petit enfant" (This morning you slept like a little child). The poem "L'Icône" (The icon) is a vision of the future and begins with the conciliatory words, "Later, when you are no longer with me and have left me for another..." But in "La Fripeuse de Moëlle" (The crusher of the pith) the defiler of their common shrine is reproached and Nino receives a lecture on the nature of women: no matter what guise she may assume, Venus or Eve, a whore remains a whore, a vampire, and syphilis follows in her wake.115

This explosion of passion can only be understood in light of Jacques' consuming fear of losing the boy and the jealousy aroused by that fear. I doubt that Nino really intended to leave his comfortable situation; rather he would have considered the dalliance as a small adventure and a pleasant distraction from life at Villa Lysis, which had become rather dull.
After this incident the household domestics from Capri were discharged for failing to fulfill their responsibilities and Jacques wired Ceylon to ask that he be sent two Singhalese houseboys.

The Expulsion from Italy

After d’Adelswärd’s brief stay at London in the autumn of 1908, his novel about Capri, *Et le feu s'éteignit sur la mer*... (And the fire was smothered by the sea), with the young sculptor Gérard Maleine as principal character, appeared in 1909 and caused a local sensation. The author spared hardly anyone in his exposure of island habits and morals. The book was much criticized and raised fiery discussions among the inhabitants of Capri; some of them, who recognized themselves in the book, attempted to prevent its distribution. According to Ettore Settanni, there was a kind of ostracism against the author, which had contributed to his eventual expulsion. Roberto Ciuni cites a formal decision of the Consiglio Comunale di Capri of 16 September 1909: to pursue the expulsion of the author of the book.

Nino was growing older and Jacques now sought pleasure with Neapolitan boys and in clouds of opium. According to Peyrefitte, he smoked at this time some 30 or 40 pipes a day which sounds like an absurdly high number but actually is not.

There is some evidence that d’Adelswärd also invited the boys from Naples to Capri. Peter Weiermair has published a reproduction of a photo of one of these boys by Guglielmo Plüschow. We can see a nude young boy, resting on a sofa; his bare buttocks are turned towards the viewer, and a skull is resting on a pillow above his head. To the left of the photo, the above-mentioned painting of Nino by Paul Höcker is hanging on the wall (fig. 27). The boy is definitely not Nino, because he is too young. Plüschow and d’Adelswärd must have known each other for some time. Although now living in Rome, Plüschow was a regular visitor of Naples and Capri, and maybe
d’Adelswärd even placed Villa Lysis at his disposal as a studio. Plüschow made many photos of Nino; some of them have been published now. A frontal nude of Nino, possibly by Plüschow, was to be found on the Internet at an Italian site (fig. 28). Jean-Claude Féray even suggested, that Plüschow made Jacques and Nino acquainted with each other, which is possible, but unfortunately there is no conclusive evidence.

Figure 27 - Interior of Villa Lysis with Höcker’s painting

The “reputation” of Villa Lysis is also documented in the autobiography of Giorgio Amendola (1907-1980), the future leader of the P.C.I. (Italian Communist Party). As an eleven-year-old boy from Rome, he had constituted himself the leader of a small gang of boys and girls who roamed about Capri in 1918: “There were forbidden zones we were not supposed to set foot on. For instance, we were told never to draw near a white villa near [Monte] Tiberio, because (…) nasty things were happening there. Later I grasped that Fersen was meant, and his strange friendships. I was eleven years old, and the Caprian boys were of about my age. They knew very well the meaning of all these allusions.” (fig. 29).

Events associated with Nino's call-up for military service, and similar festivities at Villa Lysis forced d'Adelswärd to leave Capri. Jacques invented a pleasant skit for Nino's twentieth birthday (30 September 1909) in which the boy would be elevated to a “soldier of Mithras” (fig. 30). It was performed before a group of friends one night in the Maternània grotto by torchlight. According to local gossip, Jacques himself played an important part as the “handsome youth” Hypatos, whereas the “fat old cook” of his female friends, Kate and Saidee Wolcott-Perry, played the part of Tiberius; a barber played the part of the high-priest. Peyrefitte minutely describes the twenty lashes which the Singhalese boys, playing the parts of slaves, administered at daybreak to Nino's bare buttocks.
A passer-by gathering herbs could not understand what was happening; she informed her father, who lodged an official complaint of violation of public decency.
The local authorities took advantage of this circumstance to rid themselves of d'Adelswärd. Fearing a new outburst in the press following the famous Krupp scandal in 1902, the police were kept out of the affair and Jacques’ brother-in-law, the Marquis di Bugnano, was asked to intervene. D'Adelswärd was summoned by the Marquis to Naples and given the choice of leaving the country voluntarily or being officially expelled. Jacques chose the former and returned to France in November 1909. He briefly stayed in Paris (Passy), where he lived at 24 Rue Eugène Manuel.

Jacques could now dedicate all his time to the cultural magazine, Akademos. Revue Mensuelle d’Art Libre et de Critique (fig. 31), which he had founded the previous year in Paris and which had appeared monthly from 15 January 1909. The foundation of the magazine was probably inspired by German forerunners. From visits to Germany, Jacques knew of Adolf Brand’s (1874-1945) magazine Der Eigene (1896-1931), and in 1907 the Belgian writer Georges Eekhoud (1854-1927) had established contacts between Jacques and Magnus Hirschfeld (1868-1935), who in 1899 had founded his Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen (1899-1923). Both magazines were the showcases of the German homosexual emancipation movement.
Whoever thumbs through the 2,000 odd pages of the 12 issues of *Akademos* which appeared must be impressed. The magazine was very well produced and contains countless interesting original stories, poems, plays, and critical essays, and a very impressive array of contributors, some of whom, it must be said, did not keep their promise to contribute. Even Nino, actually in military service, appears as "M. le gérant" (Mr. the book-keeper), and in issue 10 there is a little joke: the author of *Baiser de Narcisse*, Jacques himself, is requested to make his name and address known to the editors!

The editors promised a point of view free of platitudes and preconceptions. They pledged a return to the tradition of Greek simplicity and natural paganism, and to Latin purity. According to the two editorial statements in the first issue, one probably written by Jacques, their greatest enemies were vulgarity, hypocrisy, obscurantism, and ugliness; French culture had to free itself from Slavic decadence, German heaviness, the [Anglo-]Saxon slang of thieves, and Judeo-Christian prejudices. Since they did not wish to confine their vision to France alone, cultural activities in other countries were regularly reviewed and attention was given to what was being published elsewhere, including works by Elidar von Kupffer, Arthur Lyon Raile (Edward Perry Warren), John Henry Mackay, Walt Whitman, and Xavier Mayne (Edward Irenaeus Prime-Stevenson).

There were, of course, a number of contributions by Editor Jacques d'Adelswärd himself (fig. 32), either under his own name or the pseudonym Sonyeuse. In the first issue there is his "In Memoriam" for the editorial secretary, Raymond Laurent, cousin of Fernand Gregh and friend of Marcel Proust, who had committed suicide in Venice, on 24 September 1908, under the hotel window of a young American (Mr. Langhorn Whistler) with whom he was hopelessly in love. According to d’Adelswärd, his still-warm body was found by none other than Vyvyan Holland, Oscar Wilde's son!

In order to promote the magazine and its concepts, d’Adelswärd even flirted for a while with the futurism of Emilio Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (1876-1944), the future literary champion of Italian...
fascism. In the second issue of *Akademos* Marinetti appeared with a poem, “Le Dompteur” (The Tamer), whereas Jacques at the same time published two poems, “Poème dans la rosée” (Poem in Dew) and “Tes Yeux…” (Your Eyes…), in Marinetti’s magazine *Poesia. Rassegna Internazionale*. After the publication of Marinetti’s Manifesto of Futurism, d’Adelswärd contributed two pieces to the next issue of *Poesia*: a short notice about *Akademos* and a letter of adherence in which he wrote: “I adhere to the principles of *Futurism* which will disengage man of all his slavery. If it is true that an *Artist* has to live in *nostalgia*, it would be better for him to cling to the divine essence of the future than to the human materialism of the past. (…) Young people have to tremble of unrest to ask for enthousiasm. (…) Let us abandon the twilights, the graveyards, the museums or the legends, in favour of the Nativities, the PROGRESS, the holy FORCE, and LIFE!” But after only one year, Jacques had to stop publication of *Akademos* as it was consuming enormous sums of money and its circulation remained rather small.¹³²

Peyrefitte describes d’Adelswärd’s Sunday receptions of collaborators of *Akademos* and other important people during his sojourn in the Rue Eugène Manuel.¹³³ He also notes that, at that time, Jacques and Nino frequented bars, like Le Scarabée d’Or, Maurice, and Palmyre; in the latter d’Adelswärd once got so angry that the police had to be called in for assistance.¹³⁵ A letter from the Marquise Mathilde de Morny to her intimate friend, the writer Colette, confirms “riots in the Palmyre, the bistro at Montmartre.” That night d’Adelswärd got so tight that he insulted all those present; the owner of the bar had boxed his ears, and Jacques had poured a glass of wine on her. Then all homosexuals present had risen “like one man (if I may say so)” to throw him out. One of them had plucked out a tuft of d’Adelswärd’s hair; that is why Jacques denounced the bar, at the police station, as “an odious tavern for lesbians and queers.” In May 1910, *Le Journal* and *Le Matin* mentioned another incident: a collision with an eighteen-year-old cyclist, Albert Toupans, and his sixteen-year-old brother, Jules, at Garches (near Saint-Cloud). Albert was grievously wounded; the automobile of “comte Versen d’Adelsward” was driven by “Antonio Cesarini.”¹³⁷

The stay in Paris did not last very long. Since Jacques was now accustomed to a Mediterranean climate, he briefly stayed at Porquerolles on the Isles d’Hyères (near Toulon), and soon took up residence in the Villa Mezzomonte at Nice.¹³⁸ After a quarrel with Jean de Mitty about some offensive letters, which resulted in a duel between de Mitty and Robert Scheffer in September 1910 (fig. 33),¹³⁹ Jacques went on a trip to the Far East, to return home early in 1911.¹⁴⁰

![Figure 33 - Duel Jean de Mitty – Robert Scheffer (September 1910)](image-url)
In September 1911 Nino was completely discharged from military service; the two of them set out again on a trip through the Mediterranean and to the Far East, returning to Nice at the end of the spring of 1912. In the meantime, Jacques had published an interesting list of aphorisms, “Vous disiez?” (1910), and a volume of poetry, **Paradinya** (1911); some of its poems are dedicated to his brothers in arms of Akademos (among them Laurent Tailhade, Georges Eekhoud, and Robert Scheffer), and Nino (“N.C.”) is pleased with an overt sexual literary assault: “Erotique.” Jacques had also completed *Le Sourire aux yeux fermés*, which included a revised version of his essay “L’Extase” (Ecstasy) which had first appeared in Akademos. It was published in 1912. In April 1913 Jacques finally obtained permission to return to Capri, which he celebrated in the long poem, "Ode à la Terre Promise" (Ode to the promised land), dedicated to the Italian Prime Minister Luigi Luzzatti.

**The Final Years**

With the outbreak of war in 1914 (fig. 34), Jacques was asked to present himself for military service. In the French consulate in Naples, he was found unfit for combat and was sent to a hospital to be cured of addiction, though he secretly compensated for his abstinence from opium with the use of cocaine. It was during this period that he met the sculptor Vincenzo Gemito (1852-1929). Nino was wounded in battle and sent to a hospital in Milan to recover. Jacques returned to Capri, his doctors having declared him incurably ill. In Villa Lysis (fig. 35), he took up his old habits and spent most of his time treading back and forth between his study and smoking room, in the newspaper *Il Mattino* nicknamed the Opiarium. His last published volume of poetry appeared in 1921, *Hei Hsiang. Le parfum noir* (Hei Hsiang: The black perfume) (figs. 36-37), almost entirely devoted to opium.

But life had one surprise left in store for him: his acquaintance in 1920 with fifteen-year-old Corrado Annicelli (1905-1984), son of a notary in neighboring Sorrento, who had come on vacation to Capri with his parents. Corrado's mother and father had no objection to their son's association with a man of the world who knew many important people – including the painter Gennaro Favai (1879-1958) and the composer Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936) – and who above all could...
stimulate the boy's fluency in French. In Peyrefitte's novel, Corrado is called Manfred, after the half-brother of the Hohenstaufen King Conrad IV.
Initially, Corrado was more of a sly fox than a “petit faune” (little faun), as Jacques called him. The boy kept Jacques firmly in tow by expecting all sorts of things in return for his companionship: trips around Italy and the dedication of poems to himself. For the Christmas vacation of 1922, the boy tried to convince Jacques that he was unable to visit him, but Jacques insisted and was invited to come to Sorrento and fetch him. This sort of teasing was probably all part of their (erotic) play.

Corrado also came to Capri, on his own initiative, for his Easter vacation in 1923. Jacques was still working on his poem cycle, *La Neuvaine du petit faune* (The little faun's novena), which was not published before 2010. The manuscript was still in Corrado's possession when Peyrefitte spoke with him. For summer vacation, Corrado came again to Capri. Now seventeen, the boy was torn between feelings of sincere love for Jacques and compassion and an intense disgust for his drug addiction. On 15 September, Jacques brought the boy back to his parents in Sorrento, and on his return journey he visited his sister Germaine who, since her divorce, lived near Turin. Alarmed by Jacques' physical condition, she advised his mother to come at once. According to Peyrefitte, pressure was put on him to have his will drawn up.

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Figure 37 - Autograph of d'Adelswärd
It seems that on 15 October Jacques felt that his end was approaching. He departed hastily for Sorrento to pick up Corrado. According to Peyrefitte, the boy, by chance, was home sick from school that day. They immediately left for Sicily; again von Gloeden was visited in Taormina, and the grave of von Platen in Syracuse. On their return journey to Capri, early in November, they briefly stayed in Sorrento. Because of his physical condition, Corrado’s parents advised Jacques to consult a doctor and pass the night in a local inn. But since Jacques intended to buy some new cocaine at the clandestine market in the Galleria Umberto in Naples, he and Corrado departed for Naples and passed the night together in the same suite in the Hotel Excelsior. The next day Nino picked them up and took them to Capri. Jacques by now gravely ill. Jacques died after supper that same evening – of an overdose of cocaine dissolved in a glass of champagne, leaving his friends in dismay. Most commentators have assumed that it was suicide. Norman Douglas noted that a thunderstorm burst out that night and that it maintained its fury for twelve straight hours.

Doctor Gatti (assisted by his colleagues Cuomo and Weber), who signed the death certificate, gives a heart attack as the cause of death. Jacques' devoted female friend Ephi Lovatelli, a princess of Greek origins, prepared the body with rouge and lipstick, sealing his lips with a gold Macedonian coin to be used to pay the boatman carrying him over the River Styx. In order to safeguard the inheritance, Jacques' family spread the rumor that Jacques (fig. 38) had been poisoned by Nino out of jealousy. His sister, Germaine, and his mother insisted on a post-mortem examination; it was carried out by the authorities in Naples and lent no support to their accusations. Jacques' body was released and later cremated in Rome. The ashes were placed in the non-Catholic cemetery in Capri. His grave (fig. 39) is on a hillside, opposite that of Norman Douglas, whose gravestone bears the inscription, "Omnes eodem cogimur" (We all gather at the same place).
In accordance with Jacques’ stipulations, his mother was appointed executor of his last will and universal inheritor. “To bear witness and in recognition of all his benevolence to me, of his advice and his perpetual example of kindness, his indulgence and nobility, which his life has given to me,” Nino received 302 shares of the steel mills in Longwy, all credits of Jacques’ bank-accounts in Paris, Naples and Capri, and all the money in Jacques’ purse and in the villa at the moment of his death. Nino also received the right to inhabit the villa, and the right to rent it out; Germaine became the owner of the villa, without its contents. Jacques’ mother inherited the remainder of the capital in Paris, Lorraine and Switzerland. Lawsuits, about the inheritance and the validity of Jacques’ will, were to continue for the next years.153

As to Jacques’ intimates, the still mysterious Loulou stayed a bachelor for nearly forty years, until he married in 1928 and lived as the proud father of a daughter in a castle in the French countryside. According to Paul Morand, he did not quite remember his time with Jacques; when Peyrefitte asked him about it some sixty years later, he could only advance: “Fersen… he was very much in love with my sister.”154

Nino sold his rights to the villa to Germaine for 200,000 lira. His portrait by Brunelleschi and his statue by Ierace were sold to a Swiss antiquarian and have since disappeared. He returned to Rome, where he owned a newspaper kiosk and a bar, and died in middle-age in a hospital in 1943. 155 Corrado became a talented actor, on the stage as well as in the movies.156

Figure 39 - Part of d’Adelswärd’s tombstone, Cimitero Acattolico, Capri

Editor’s Note:

Will H.L. Ogrinc is a Dutch author and medievalist. The author wishes to thank Raimondo Biffi, Jean-Claude Féray, Patricia Marcoz, and Caspar Wintermans for their support, Paul Snijders for kind permission to use his library, Dré Leyten and Wolfram Setz for their criticism and photogra- phic contributions, Ed Schilders and Gonnie van der Zander for assistance with the translation of some obscure passages from the French, and the late Frank Torey for the translation of the first version (1994) of this essay from the Dutch. This version was needed, since a lot of historical (French) newspapers are recently available in digitalized version and easily to be searched.
APPENDIX

[dans la marge: Page première]

TRIBUNAL DE PREMIÈRE INSTANCE
du Département de la Seine
Police correctionnelle Neuvième Chambre

Audience publique du Jeudi Trois Décembre mil neuf cent trois

MM.
Bondoux, Président
Chanson, Juge
Coularou, Juge
Lescouvé, substitut
Weydert, greffier

1.67.868
68.067

Pour le Procureur de la République

Détenu: d’Adelsward Jacques, 23 ans, né à Paris, 8e arrondissement, le 20 février 1880, de Axel et de Louise Emilie Alexandrine Vuhrer, célibataire, demeurant à Paris, avenue Friedland, N° 18,

Mandat de dépôt du 9 juillet 1903
2e Mandat de dépôt du 10 juillet 1903

Détenu: de Warren Albert François, 22 ans, né à Saint-Dié (Vosges) le 12 août 1881, de Anthelme Stanislas Firmin Léon et de Pauline Louise Marie Huyn de Varnéville [= Verneville], demeurant à Paris, rue Alfred de Vigny N° 14,

Mandat de dépôt du 17 octobre 1903

Outrages publics à la pudeur; Excitation de mineurs à la débauche.
Le Tribunal, après en avoir délibéré conformément à la loi; Attendu que, d’après la nature des faits reprochés à d’Adelsward et à de Warren, la publicité des débats pourrait être dangereuse pour la morale publique, Faisant droit aux réquisitions du Ministère Public, Vu l’article 87 de la Constitution du 4 novembre 1848, Ordonne que les débats auront lieu à Huis clos.

[Signé] Coularou, Bondoux, Chanson, Weydert

1bis.67.868
68.067

Pour le Procureur de la République

Détenu: d’Adelsward Jacques, 23 ans, né à Paris, 8e arrondissement, le 20 février 1880, de Axel et de Louise Emilie Alexandrine Vuhrer, célibataire, demeurant à Paris, avenue Friedland N° 18,

Mandat de dépôt du 9 juillet 1903
2e Mandat de dépôt du 10 juillet 1903

Détenu: de Warren Albert François, 22 ans, né à Saint-Dié (Vosges) le 12 août 1881, [dans la marge: appel de Warren (...) 17 Décembre 1903] de Anthelme Stanislas Firmin Léon et de Pauline Louise Marie Huyn de Varnéville [= Verneville], demeurant à Paris, rue Alfred de Vigny, [dans la marge: Page deuxième] Numéro 14

Mandat de dépôt du 17 octobre 1903

Outrages publics à la pudeur; Excitation de mineurs à la débauche.
Le Tribunal après en avoir délibéré conformément à la loi, Attendu que de Warren et d’Adelsward sont poursuivis pour avoir en mil neuf cent trois à Paris, 1° à diverses reprises, commis des outrages publics à la pudeur en se livrant à des gestes ou à des actes obscènes en présence de mineurs de vingt et un ans; 2° ensemble et de concert, attenté aux mœurs en excitant, favorisant ou facilitant habituellement la débauche ou la corruption des sieurs Berecki, Boesch, de Pourcelet Adalbert, de Pourcelet Jacques, de Pourcelet René; que d’Adelsward est poursuivi également pour avoir à Paris, en mil neuf cent deux et mil neuf cent trois, attenté aux mœurs en excitant, favorisant ou facilitant habituellement la débauche ou la corruption du sieur Locré; sur ce premier chef de prévention: Attendu que l’inculpation d’outrage
publié à la pudeur n’est pas suffisamment établi à l’encontre d’Adelsward et de Warren ; qu’en effet les actes obscènes auxquels ceux-ci se sont livrés, ont été commis dans un lieu privé d’où ils ne pouvaient être vus du dehors ; que la présence de personnes qui y ont participé ou qui en ont été les témoin voluntarily ne suffit pas pour constituer la publicité exigée par l’article 330 du Code Pénal ; renvoie de ce chef les prévenus des fins de la poursuite.

Sur le deuxième chef de prévention : En ce qui concerne d’Adelsward : Attendu qu’il ressort de l’instruction et des débats la preuve que d’Adelsward, en mil neuf cent trois à Paris, a excité, facilité ou favorisé habituellement la débauche ou la corruption des sieurs Berecki, Boesch, Croisé de Pourcelet Adalbert, Croisé de Pourcelet Jacques, Croisé de Pourcelet René et Locré, mineurs de vingt et un ans, en se livrant à des actes de lubricité, à diverses reprises, à des époques différentes, en leur présence ou dans une chambre voisine et dans des conditions telles que les enfants ne pouvaient ignorer ce qui s’y passait ; Attendu que pour parvenir à son but, d’Adelsward attirait ces mineurs par des goûters, leur lisait des poésies lascives et mettait sous leurs yeux des gravures licencieuses ; qu’il allait attendre Berecki et Locré jusqu’à la sortie de leur lycée ;

En ce qui concerne de Warren : Attendu qu’il ressort également de l’instruction et des débats la preuve que de Warren, en mil neuf cent trois, à Paris, a excité, facilité ou favorisé habituellement la débauche ou la corruption de Croisé de Pourcelet Adalbert, Croisé de Pourcelet Jacques, Croisé de Pourcelet René, [dans la marge: Page troisième] mineurs de vingt et un ans, en se livrant à différentes reprises et à des époques différentes, en leur présence, à des actes immoraux ; qu’il a de plus, dans un but de corruption, lié connaissance avec ces enfants au Parc Monceau, les a reçus chez lui, leur a offert des goûters et les a mis en rapport avec d’Adelsward ; attendu qu’il y a lieu en raison des circonstances de la cause de faire aux prévenus une application modérée de la loi ; attendu que les faits ci-dessus constituent le délit prévu et puni par les articles 334, paragraphe 1er et 339 du Code Pénal, dont lecture a été donnée par le Président et qui sont ainsi conçus (334) sera puni d’un emprisonnement de six mois à trois ans et d’une amende de cinquante francs à cinq mille francs 1° quiconque aura attenté aux mœurs en excitant, favorisant ou facilitant habituellement la débauche ou la corruption de la jeunesse de l’un ou de l’autre sexe au-dessous de l’âge de vingt et un ans ; 2° [rature: quiconque, pour satisfaire les passions d’autrui, aura embauché, entraîné ou détourné, même avec son consentement, une femme ou fille mineure en vue de la débauche] (339). Les coupables d’un des délits mentionnés au précédent article seront interdits de toute tutelle ou curatelle et de toute participation aux conseils de famille savoir : les individus auxquels s’appliquent les paragraphes 1, 2, 3 et 4 de cet article pendant deux ans au moins et de cinq ans au plus, et ceux dont il est parlé dans le paragraphe suivant pendant six ans au moins et vingt ans au plus, si le délit a été commis par le père ou la mère le coupable sera de plus privé des droits et avantages à lui accordé sur la personne et les biens de l’enfant par le Code Civil, livre premier titre IX de la puissance paternelle [dans la marge: Dit qu’ils seront interdits pendant cinq années des droits de famille mentionnés à l’article 339 du Code Pénal] ; dans tous les cas les coupables pourront en outre être mis, par l’arrêt ou le jugement en état d’interdiction de séjour en observant pour la durée de l’interdiction ce qui vient d’être établi par le premier paragraphe du présent article.

Condamne d’Adelsward et de Warren chacun à Six mois d’emprisonnement, et chacun et solidairement à Cinquante francs d’amende.

Les condamne sous la même solidarité aux dépens liquides à mille trois cent soixante huit francs quatre vingt dix centimes plus trois francs pour droits de poste. Fixe au minimum la durée de la contrainte par corps s’il y a lieu de l’exercer pour le recouvrement des amendes et des dépens.

[Signé] Coularou, Bondoux, Chanson, Weydert

NOTES

1 The sub-title of this essay is a translation of the inscription "Amori et Dolori Sacrum" which d'Adelswärd placed on his villa in Capri (first called "La Gloriette" and later "Villa Lysis") in 1905. The line is taken from an inscription on the church of Santa Maria della Passione in Milan and at the same time served as title for a book by Augustin-Maurice Barrès (Paris: Félix Juven, 1902). The latter contains, among other things, recollections by Barrès of his youth in Nancy where, with the Marquis Stanislas de Guitaï, he attended the lyceum. De Guitaï founded the Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix in 1884 (see my article "Boys in Art. The Artist and his Model: Ferdinand and Hector Hodler. A New Approach" in Journal of Homosexuality 20:1/2 (1990), p. 79). Barrès, a member of this order, and d'Adelswärd knew each other.

2 The following variations appear: Jacques d'Adelsward(-)Fersen; (Jacques) de Fersen; Fersen; Count (de) Fersen; Baron Jacques. The newspapers L'Aurore and Le Rappel called him several times (Jacques d')Axel d'Adelsward. His own publications for the most part list the author as Jacques d'Adelswärd(-Fersen), whereas the court documents refer to him as Jacques d'Adelsward. Arvid Andrén, in his Capri. From the Stone Age to the Tourist Age (Göteborg: Paul Åströms Förlag, 1980), p. 161, mentions the incredible carelessness to which the writer's name has often been subject: "Fate willed that he, who could not tolerate a single misprint in his poems, had both his first and last names misspelt on his tombstone, which attests that it was raised over the Baron Jaques Adelsward Fersen." A photo of the tombstone (see fig. 39) is reproduced in À la Jeunesse d'Amour. Villa Lysis a Capri: 1905-2005 (Capri: Edizioni La Conchiglia, 2005), p. 122 and R. Peyrefitte, L'Esuse di Capri (Capri: Edizioni La Conchiglia, 2003), [no pagination]. Peyrefitte had previously pointed out in his L'Exilé de Capri. Édition définitive (Paris: Flammarion/Le Livre de Poche, 1974), p. 321, that the data on the tombstone were incorrect: his date of birth was not 20 February 1879, but 20 February 1880, and his date of death not 6 November 1923 but 5 November 1923. J. Money (Capri: Island of Pleasure. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1986, pp. 86, 310, n. 30) obviously overlooked this correction in the date of birth. Peyrefitte must have copied his correction from the sentence of 1903. It is confirmed by the Civil Registration of Paris: "Jacques d'Adelswärd" was born 20 February 1880, Rue de Constantinople 8, at 13.30 p.m. (Paris, Archives de Paris. État Civil du Huitième Arrondissement de Paris, 1880, Nr. 259). Meanwhile the typesetter has played his part in d'Adelswärd's commemoration. On a map of Capri which I bought there in 1985, Villa Lysis is identified as Villa Felsen; in an article by Boudewijn Büch the writer suddenly becomes "Fernsen" (see "Curieux Capri" in Avenue 21:8, 1986, p. 82); in Memorie di un Uomo Inutile by Francesco Caravita di Sirignano (Napoli: Fiorentino, 1990), p. 243, he is called Jacques Fersen d'Adelswar, whereas Claudia Salaris calls him Adelswärd de Fersne (see Marinetti editore. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990, p. 41). Even in the first edition of this essay, in the journal Paidika, the writer’s name was misspelt three times (Jacques d'Adelswärd-Fersen, Jacques d'Adelswärd), etc., etc. Philip Core carries matters a bit too far in his Camp: The Lie that Tells the Truth (New York: Delilah Books, 1984), p. 83 by referring to the author as "Von Fersen, Baron D'Adlesward" and above all by dating him a century earlier, listing the dates of birth and death of Hans Axel Count von Fersen ("le beau Fersen"), a personal friend and purported lover of Queen Marie Antoinette, and instigator of the flight to Varennes. This is hardly "camp"; it is sheer laziness.

3 The reference here is to a number of notebooks with a handwritten selection from d'Adelswärd's volumes of poetry in the Royal Library at Brussels. The Belgian copyist faithfully transcribed the various volumes and noted beside the titles of the poems he does not include in his selection the comment "s.i." ("sans intérêt" or "not interesting"). The copyist clearly made his selection on the basis of homosexual themes and is often sloppy in copying the punctuation. After Brongersma's death (1998) his manuscript collection - deposited in the IISG (Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis/International Institute of Social History) at Amsterdam.

4 In 1987 Eric Wohl produced a very thorough study of the literary reception of Peyrefitte’s L'Exilé de Capri in his unpublished B.A. thesis Mémoire de IVème Année (...) sur Interferences Morales dans le Domaine Esthétique: de Fersen à Peyrefitte (Mémoire of the fourth year [of university] on moral interferences in the aesthetic domain: from Fersen to Peyrefitte) (Kensington, Australia: University of New South Wales, 1987). Wohl concluded that the criticism of Peyrefitte's novel rested more on moral prejudice than on the upholding of literary/aesthetic criteria. In light of this study the question remains why Peyrefitte depicted the hero of his novel as being so pitiful. A copy of the thesis was kindly furnished by Professor J.S. Chaussevis of the French Department of the University of New South Wales.


6 Letter of the Préfecture de Police, Cabinet du Préfet. Archive - Musée, Paris, 31 March 1988: "Research in our archives has not enabled us to discover any documents relating to Baron Jacques d'ADELSWARD (Fersen) and Albert de WARREN." The statement implied that either documents of the affair did not exist or that they could not be (were not permitted to be?) found. For further information, the letter referred me to the Ministry of Justice! However, in Homosexualité et prostitution masculine à Paris, 1870-1918 (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2005), pp. 71-72, Régis Revenin quotes a document from this archive in which “le Baron de FERSEN” is mentioned (see Note 84).
9 Letter from the Ambassade van het Kobinkrijk (sic) der Nederlanden, Hoofd Pers- en Culturele Zaken, Paris, 4 October 1988. Within a year, the same cultural attaché was removed from his duties in Paris and sent to the Dutch embassy in Saudi Arabia (see NRC-Handelsblad 23 September 1989, p. 7)!
11 See, for example, J. Money, op. cit., pp. 255, 301. Although Money was aware that the novel is "a blend of fact and fancy," his study of d’Adelswärd’s life is often untrue and unreliable in its details because he a) did not consult a number of sources; b) largely based his facts on Peyrefitte’s novel which, above all, he sometimes wrongly interpreted or even read censoriously (perhaps the English translation which he used is here to blame); c) used Compton Mackenzie’s novel set in Capri, Vestal Fire (1927) (London: Hogarth Press, 1985), and the communications of prominent Italians, as objective historical sources without considering the possibility that they had colored the facts. For instance, Francesco Caravita di Sirignano, op. cit., p. 184, refers to Nino Cesarini as "Cesario Romano" (little Caesar from Rome).
12 R. Peyrefitte, Propos Secrets [1], p. 195.
14 It definitely concerned persons who were still alive. Recently Peyrefitte had begun to reveal several names in his Propos Secrets.
15 R. Peyrefitte, L’Exilé de Capri, p. 80. Peyrefitte mentions pupils of the Carnot, Condorcet, and Janson-de-Sailly lyceea. D’Adelswärd knew the latter from his own school years. I was able to document, among others, the following names from the Carnot school: André François-Poncet, politician, diplomat and writer who during the Second World War was interned in Germany; Gabriel Marcel (son of art historian Henry Marcel, after 1912 director of the Musées Nationaux), philosopher and writer and spokesman for Christian existentialism; Paul Morand (son of painter Eugène Morand, director of the École des Arts Décoratifs), diplomat and writer; Pierre-Etienne Flandin, repeatedly minister of several departments after 1924, including Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Vichy regime, arrested by Charles de Gaulle and in 1946, upon Winston Churchill’s intercession, found innocent.
16 See P. Morand, Venises (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), p. 39-40; R. Peyrefitte, Propos Secrets 2, p. 359. After his stay at the Carnot, the writer Paul Morand (1888-1976) studied law and political sciences at Oxford and Paris. He became a diplomat in 1913, and was dismissed and punished as an ambassador for the Vichy regime in Bern (Switzerland) in 1944. See also Note 47.
17 Unfortunately the 660 pages dissertation (Paris-Sorbonne University) of Patricia Maroz, Renaitre païen à la Belle Époque: la vie et l’oeuvre de Jacques d’Adelswärd-Fersen ([Paris: s.n.,] 2008), has not yet been published. We must of necessity rely upon Peyrefitte for some information about Jacques’ ancestry and youth. See also Claès C:son Lewenhaupt (ed.), Sveriges Ridderskaps och Adels Kalender 1923 (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1922), pp. 5-7. The newspaper, Le Soir, was established in 1867 and offered moderate opposition to the empire. Following the war of 1870/71 it supported the politics of Adolphe Thiers and the establishment of a conservative republic. In 1873 the paper was bought by the Orleanists. According to “Obsèques de M. Vührer” in Gil Blas 23 October 1886, p. [3], Vührer died of grief over the premature death of his only son (François George Hermann Vührer, c.1854-1885) who had died the year before.
18 Ample discussions about Jacques’ ancestry in J. Balteau, et al. (ed.), Dictionnaire de Biographie Française. I (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1933), p. 544-545. The biographical note about d’Adelswärd was composed by A. Jaulme, librarian at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. However, the year of Göran Axel’s arrest mentioned (“1793”) is odd, because, in that case, Göran Axel should have been a twelve-year-old “officer” (see for Göran Axel’s year of birth and death: [Johan] Gabriel Anrep, Svenska adelns ättar-taflor. I, Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt, 1858, p. 10). According to Viveka Adelswärd, “Alltför adlig, alltför rik, alltför lättjefull”; Jacques d’Adelswärd Fersen (Stockholm: Carlsson Bokförlag, 2014), pp. 17-19 (p. 19 also has a nice portrait of Göran Axel), it is clear from the archives of the Adelswärd family in Sweden that Göran Axel became a captive of war during the Battle of Lübeck in 1806, and that he was sent to Longwy by one of Napoleon’s generals, Jean Baptiste Jules Bernadotte, the future king of Sweden and Norway. Obviously, Jaulme had copied his inaccurate information from Arthur Dupin’s article “Les Dégénérés” in Le Journal 13 July 1903, p. 3; the same article mentions marriage of the daughter of Notary Nicolaus Joachim Bernard.

Axel was praised in “Sport Nautique” in Gil Blas 11 September 1883, pp. 3-4: “Un de nos plus sympathiques yachtmen, M. le baron A. d’Adelswärd, vient d’offrir à la Société des sauveteurs du Havre un grand canot de sauvetage qui, par un système des plus ingénieux, peut être lancé à la mer en huit secondes, tout armé et l’équipage à bord. Comme on le voit, ceux qui naviguent pour leur agrément n’oublient pas ceux qui vont à la mer pour gagner leur vie, et plus d’un marin devra son salut au généreux yachtsman, auquel nous adressons nos plus vives félicitations.” It is not clear whether this life boat is the same as the “canot (life boat) Adelsward” of the Rescue Society of Honfleur, which, directed by “patron Langlois” and “sous-patron Périer,” and after many hours, had succeeded in rescuing the crew (four sailors and the captain) of an English schooner, the “Mary,” during a big tempest on 1 July 1888: one year after Axel’s death! One might say that the rescue of these five sailors was to commemorate the anniversary of Axel’s death in Panama. See: “Récupérons pour faits de sauvetage et actes de dévouement” in Journal Officiel de la République française 15 April 1890, p. 1933, and Précis analytique des travaux de l’Académie des sciences, belles-lettres et arts de Rouen pendant l’année 1897-1898 (Rouen-Paris: Imprimerie Cagniard / A. Picard, 1899), pp. 80-83.

J. d’Adelswärd, Chansons Légères, pp. 156-158.


J. d’Adelswärd, op. cit., pp. 95-96: “À mon frère Renold” (To my brother Renold). In neither version of his novel does Peyrefitte mention the boy, nor does Viveka Adelswärd, op. cit., pp. [4-5], in her genealogical tree of the family! According to the Civil Registration of Paris, Renold was born 18 May 1881; he was registered with the Christian names Reinhold Harald (Paris, Archives de Paris. État Civil du Huitième Arrondissement de Paris, 1881, Nr. 726); he died in Paris 11 January 1882, at the age of 7 months and 24 days (communication from Laurent François, President of the Association “Les Amis d’Henri Duvernois,” who kindly furnished some genealogical data concerning Jacques’ family). Germaine’s year of death is to be found on the Internet (http://www.sardimpex.com/capece/capece%20minutolo.htm); her year of birth is here incorrectly listed as 1888. A photo album of the d’Adelswärd family, probably from Germaine’s inheritance, is in the Archive of Pietro Tommasini Mattucci at Città di Castello; it is to be found on the Internet (http://www.archiphotography.it/galleria.php?Categoria1_Click=7&Categoria2_Click=7&ID_Categoria1=1&ID_Categoria2=40&ID_Categoria3=89&Categoria2=Famiglia_Adelswärd/Fersen&Img_x=Fersen_021.jpg).


J. d’Adelswärd, L’Hymnaire, pp. 136-137. English translation by the author. Referring to this poem, Mirande Lucien (ed.), Akademos. J. d’Adelswärd-Fersen et la cause homosexuelle (Lille: Gay Kitsch Camp, 2000), p. 6, observed: “Though Fersen has not the genius of Rimbaud, it looks like he has.” According to Pierre Mortier, “J. d’Adelswärd” in Gil Blas 12 July 1903, p. 2, Jacques was caught twice reading de Musset, which resulted in a big scandal. About the poet and dramatist Louis-Charles-Alfred de Musset (1810-1857), the “enfant gâté du romantisme” (spoiled child of Romanticism), G. B[rereton], in S.H. Steinberg (ed.), Cassell’s Encyclopaedia of Literature. II (London: Cassell & Company Ltd., 1953), p. 1278, observed: “At 30 Musset, his naturally fragile health undermined by sexual excess and alcoholism and a prey to hallucinations conceivably of epileptic origin, was prematurely old. New disappointments in love (...) completed his demoralization.”


35 R. Peyrefitte, L’Exilé de Capri, p. 30. Though mentioned in, for instance, Chansons Légères (“Du même auteur”) as a “poem,” according to Fernand Hauser, op. cit., p. 1, it is an ordinary love-story, without any morbidity, and simply told. Since it is not to be found in any library, it is hard to decide whether the book is really a poem or a novella. Michel Desbrûères, “J. d’Adelswärd-Fersen ou la vie inoubliable à Capri” in Nouvelle Revue de Paris (1989), p. 68, mentions the names of its protagonists as Joyzefin and Gisèle.


37 Photographs of the wedding are to be found in Viveka Adelswärd, op. cit., pp. 8, 44, 49.


45 J. Balteau, et al. (ed.), loc. cit.; R. Peyrefitte, op. cit., p. 46. During his military service, he first stayed at the fortress of Les Ayvelles (4th Company of the 91th Infantry Regiment), and later in Charleville-Mézières and Sedan (Ardennes), where he ranked to the raze of a corporeal. According to Peyrefitte, d’Adelswärd read to his camp comrades, including Édouard Chimoit (1880-1959), engraver from Lille, passages from works by Rimbaud, Péladan, and Huysmans. Several newspapers also mentioned orgies held in Jacques’ private abode at Charleville (Arthur Dupin, “Un scandale” in Le Journal 11 July 1903, p. 2; “Messes Noires” in Le Matin 12 July 1903, p. 2; “Échos. ‘Monsieur le baron ne reçoit pas’” in L’Aurore 13 July 1903, p. 1; “Pornographie mondaine” in Le Rappel 13 July 1903, p. [1]; “Les deux barons” in Le Petit Parisien 29 November 1903, p. 3). It remains unclear whether Jacques was licensed at law: this was claimed in an anonymous article in Le Matin headed “Messes Noires en plein bacchanale,” 11 July 1903, p. 2, but was denied by A. Jarry, “L’Âme ouverte à l’Art antique” in MESSES NOIRES. Le Canard Sauvage 1:19 (1903), [no pagination]. Louis Peltier, “Un gros scandale. Fêtes orgiaques” in Gil Blas 11 July 1903, p. [2], mentions the name of the chauffeur as Fernand Bretonnet (nicknamed “Mocau”). Peltier incorrectly wrote that Jacques was of Bavarian origins.

40 It has been suggested that d’Adelswärd had to finance himself the publication of his books, and that title page imprints, such as “third edition,” were often spurious, clearly intending to exaggerate his commercial success. However, I have seen myself different editions of some of his books. A recently discovered letter of d’Adelswärd of 19 August 1902 (Rome, Italy, Collection Raimondo Biffi), apparently written from Sedan to his publisher, confirms that there were several editions of Chansons Légères and Ébauches et Débauches, and that Jacques was expecting the payment of royalties.
De Adelswärd. His father refused from the French press. Caspar Wintermans is preparing an annotated anthology of articles Kultur directly from

NOIRES. Le Canard Sauvage à travers l’Avenue de Friedland” in Figaro impr
distinguishes Saint Pierre from the Cath
dead of the king of Scotland, they occupied royal functions. They have transmitted to their posterity, as the best of

During the affair, several newspapers brought out this Parisian pied piper of Hamelin’s record,

D'Adelswärd's guardian who visited Jacques at de Valles’ office on 11 July, with Jacques’ father, who had died in 1887 (see “Grave affaire de meurs” in L’Aurore 12 July 1903, p. 2; “Les Messes Noires” in La Presse 2 August 1928, p. 3). The case was not overlooked by the foreign press. The report in the Berliner Tageblatt 10 July 1903 (taken directly from Le Matin) appears in Iwan Bloch, Das Sexualleben unserer Zeit in seinen Beziehungen zu modernen Kultur (Berlin: Louis Marcus Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1909), p. 698. Nancy Erber wrote an interesting essay about the press coverage of the case (see N. Erber, op. cit.). Caspar Wintermans is preparing an annotated anthology of articles from the French press.

47 P. Morand, op. cit., p. 40. Morand recalls the response of his school friends on a walk with his father over the Square of San Marco in Venice, during the course of which they suddenly encountered d’Adelswärd. His father refused
Jacques’ proffered hand because he did not wish to shake hands with a pederast, much to the amusement of the young Morand who observed that his father, without realizing it, did so all day long: “Je ne serre pas la main à un pédéraaste”, disait mon père (sans se douter qu’il ne faisait que ça toute la journée).” Morand must have been mistaken here in the year he cites (1908), for the meeting can only have taken place in 1907. Several newspapers mentioned Jacques’ denial of hauling up boys at their school door (see for instance: “Faits divers, Une affaire scandaleuse” in *Journal des Débats Politiques et Littéraires* 12 July 1903, p. 3; “Moeurs antiques” in *La Lanterne* 30 November 1903, p. 2), but his chauffeur, Bernedat, testified in contrario (see “Grave affaire de Moeurs” in *L’Aurore* 19 July 1903, p. 1; “Nouvelles Diverses. À Paris, Un scandale Parisien” in *Le Figaro* 19 July 1903, p. 4; “Les Messes Noires” in *Le Matin* 19 July 1903, p. 2; “Scandaleuse affaire” in *Le Petit Parisien* 19 July 1903, p. 2; “Un scandale” in *Le Temps* 20 July 1903, p. 3; “Le scandale de l’Avenue Friedland” in *La Lanterne* 21 July 1903, p. 3). Still in 1959, Paul Morand was able to recall d’Adelswärd’s extravagant appearance at their school door: “Fersen, dégoûté sans doute de femmes par les amours de son ancêtre avec Marie-Antoinette, faisait la sortie du lycée, avec des yeux peints et une canne à la jaloux (honni soit...) imitant J. Lorrain et M. de Phocas.” (see Paul Morand and Jacques Chardonne, op. cit., pp. 643-644). In “Les complices de de Warren. La traite des blancs.” Rabatteurs professionnels” (*La Presse* 19 July 1903, p. 2), mention is made of professional crimps who hauled up the boys at their school door and took them to d’Adelswärd and de Warren. See also René Racot, “Le Scandale de l’Avenue Friedland” in *Gil Blas* 19 July 1903, p. [4]; “Les Messes Noires” in *Le Matin* 19 July 1903, p. 2.


Viveka Adelswärd, op. cit., pp. 79-81, provides first-hand information: Jacques’ aunt, Jeanne d’Adelswärd, took the lead: before engaging Maître Demange, she consulted Adolf Adelswärd, the military attaché of Sweden and Norway in France, the Swedish minister Åkerlund, and Jacques’ former guardian, Viscount Audoin de Dampierre. Jacques’ mother was not invited nor allowed to participate, because she was considered to be a problem and of no help (see also p. 26, and Note 106).

The orthography of the names is far from uniform in the press: Motte(t), Magnan, Val(l)on / Mottet, Maignan, Wallon / Mottet, Magnon, Walton / Garnier, Magnan, Wall(l)on.


“Scandaleuse affaire” in *Le Petit Parisien* 16 July 1903, p. 3.


Henri Rochefort, “ Crimes impunis” in *L’Intransigeant* 8 September 1903, p. 1. *L’Intransigeant* was at first the newspaper of the left-wing opposition and the pulpit of the anti-Dreyfusards; it later became a rather radical right-wing paper.

André Girard, “La vie normale” in *Les Temps Nouveaux* 18 July 1903, p. 1 (see also Hugues Destrem, “La Jeunesse française” in *Le Rappel* 18 July 1903, p. [1]). Friar Flamidien [aka. Isâie Edmond Lucien Hamez] of the Christian Brothers and teacher at the day school of Notre-Dame-de-la-Treille at Lille is said to have abused and killed a twelve-year-old pupil, Gaston Louis Alphonse Foveaux, in 1899 (see: “Campagne cléricale” in *L’Aurore* 15 July 1903, p. 1; Henry (Bon) Dard, *Les Calomnités, les frères des écoles chrétiennes et le frère Flamidien* (20 juillet 1899), Arras: Sœur-Charruy, [1899]; Henri Masquelier, *La Vérité sur le crime de Lille, Le frère Flamidien: par Cyr, Lille: [s.n., 1899]). The Flamidien-affair was still of current interest in 1903, since it also inspired Émile Zola’s ant clerical novel
Verité. Les quatre Évangiles (Paris: E. Fasquelle, 1903). Édouard Adolphe Drumont (1844-1917) was a journalist and anti-Semite, founder of the anti-Semitic gutter paper La Libre Parole. A typical example of an anti-aristocratic contribution to the press coverage is J. Philip, “Pourriture” in L’Aurore 14 July 1903, p. 1, for d’Adelswärd has fallen deeper than a common labourer ever would: “The labourer and the farmer do have their vices, but less complicate (…) and more sane. (…) They stay in contact with nature. Even immoral, they stay normal.” In 1904, the Dutch newspaper Algemeen Handelsblad referred to the political tangle in its résumé of the case: “another case of immorality which at first seemed, especially to the socialists, a splendid opportunity to inveigh against the upper classes, but finally turned out to be restricted to the dissipations of two young depraved little barons, the case Adelsward-Warren. France can be satisfied with the goddess of Justice.” (see “Frankrijk in 1903. Rechtszaken en toestand des lands” in Algemeen Handelsblad 6 January 1904, p. Avondblad 10). Le Matin quoted an article about the scandal by Paul de Cassagnac (see also Note 32 in L’Autorité (see “L’Autorité” in Le Matin 17 July 1903, p. 3), which stated that all members of the upper classes were republicans and freethinkers. According to “Scandaleuse affaire” in Le Petit Parisien 16 July 1903, p. 3, d’Adelswärd called himself a socialist, and manifested “a bizarre opinion”: “he is not a republican because of his birth, but he is a socialist, because, as he said, «one can perfectly be both a socialist and a grand seigneur!»” Already in July 1903, Fernand Hauser (“Les Noces de Satan” in La Presse 11 July 1903, p. 2) quoted Charles de Valès: “As to the accomplices [of d’Adelswärd], if there are any, they do not belong to the clergy nor to the world of politics.”


62 Ms. 3 December 1903, Paris, Archives de Paris, op. cit., fol. 1-3 (see Appendix); Renard, “Gazette Judiciaire. Scènes antiques” in Gil Blas 4 December 1903, p. [2].


64 A.-S. Lagail, Les Mémoires du Baron Jacques: Librécités infernales de la noblesse décadente (Priapeville: Librairie Galante, An IV du XXe siècle foutatif [=1904]). A clumsy English translation was published in Canada in 1988; it had one positive result: the 1991 reprinting of the original text in France, now provided with page numbers, and the pages printed at last in proper sequence. See: A. Gallais, The Memoirs of Baron Jacques: The Diabolical


68 J. Lorrain, Pélêlaestres: Le Poison de la littérature (Paris: A. Méricant, 1910), p. 135. The book was posthumously published by Georges Normandy, the executor of Lorrain’s last will. Further details are mentioned.

69 The furnishing of duplicate copies of court dossiers for the benefit of the accused is a rather recent practice in many countries of Europe (communication from the late Edward Brongersma). It is unclear whether this started at an earlier period in France. In 2000, Michael Sibalis, Professor in History at Wilfrid Laurier University (Ontario, Canada), suggested to me that Marc Daniel (pseudonym of Michel Duchein) might have been the one who gave Peyrefitte the opportunity to see the dossier. Both, Peyrefitte and Daniel, were important members of “Arcadie,” the French gay association (1954-1982). Marc Daniel was a historian and archivist at the Archives Nationales.

ephemera, and these photos are not suggestive at all. (…) And Mr. de Valles showed us and a young counsel, present during the interview, some frivolous, very frivolous photos. The young counsel lowered his eyes. ” See also “Grave affaire de moeurs” in L’Aurore 11 July 1903, p. 2; “Dernières Nouvelles du Palais. Scènes contiques” in Le Temps 29 November 1903, p. [4]. In the sentence there is only reference to “gravures licencieuses” (licentious engravings) which d’Adelswärd showed to the schoolboys. N. Erber, op. cit., pp. 194 and 200, is quoting “Un scandale Parisien” in Le Figaro 11 July 1903, p. 3. Arthur Dupin’s article “Un scandale” in Le Journal 11 July 1903, p. 2, and Marréaux Delavigne’s article “Le scandale de l’avenue Friedland” in Le Journal 29 November 1903, p. 2. See also Arthur Dupin, “Les ‘Messes noires’” in Le Journal 12 July 1903, p. 2. The information about the findings in de Warren’s home is incorrect. In the Dossier d’Instruction, op. cit., there is a note of de Valles (appendix of a letter from the Tribunal de la Seine of 10 July 1903), in which he states that nothing was found in de Warren’s home, because de Warren had destroyed all compromising evidence (see also “Le scandale de l’Avenue de Friedland” in La Lanterne 24 July 1903, p. 1). However, “obscene photos” must have been present before. In a document from the Tribunal de la Seine of 12 July 1903 in the Dossier, Adalbert Croisé de Pourcelet testified that he had seen how a stark naked de Warren had left his bath, and had taken photos of Raoul Clerc, who was nude as well (see also Note 84).

75 de Fersen, op. cit., pp. 151-180. I have been unable to discover whether d’Adelswärd himself was a member of the Rosicrucians or only sympathized with them. In any case, Péladan and Barrès, leaders in the Ordre de la Rose-Croix Catholique (a secession of the Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix – see Note 1), participated in d’Adelswärd’s magazine Akademos in 1909. According to Otto de Joux (pseudonym of Otto Rudolf Podjukl), Die Entenfützen des Liebesglücks oder das dritte Geschlecht. Ein Beitrag zur Seelenkunde (Leipzig: Max Spohr, 1893), p. 126, this order was nothing more than a veiled society of homosexuals. In my opinion, Lyllian’s cryptic remark refers to concepts of Péladan about “The Worthy Subject” and “Ephic Beauty” (see my article “Neither to Laugh nor to Cry. A Failure in the End: Charles Filiger (1863-1928)” in Paidika 1:4, 1988, pp. 38-41).
76 de Fersen, op. cit., p. 162.
77 Eroneously given by Komrij, op. cit., p. 67, as a “Hungarian poet.” He was a seventeen-year-old Polish boy whom Lord Lyllian encouraged to write poetry. From the sentence it seems that not just Loulou Locré but also the Berecki boy had special bonds with d’Adelswärd. The Dossier d’Instruction, op. cit., also mentions the boy’s Christian name: André.
78 de Fersen, op. cit., p. 27: at the threshold of puberty, the boy fondles himself in front of a mirror, fantasizing about a non-existent “brother.” Already in Notre-Dame des Mers Morts (Venise) (Paris: P. Sevin et E. Rey, 1902), p. 215, d’Adelswärd’s principal character, Jacques de Liéven, is weeping when he recalls his deceased “little brother” Renold: “I love him since I do not have him any more.” According to Jean-Claude Féra and Raimondo Biffi, “Ce que révèlent les lettres (1904-1908) de Jacques d’Adelswärd à Édouard Chimot” in Inverses, Littératures, Arts et Homosexualités 13 (2013), pp. 97-101, Armand Marie de Prat (1861-1922), the French vice-consul in Venice at the turn of the century, is hidden behind the mask of d’Herserange. Unfortunately, there is no discussion of why d’Adelswärd should have used the name d’Herserange as a pseudonym of de Prat: the transition Wilde – Skilde is comprehensible, the transition de Prat – d’Herserange is not!
79 Paris, Archives de France. BB18 2255, dr. 1468 A 1903.
80 See Note 60.
82 Pierre Velpry (mentioned as “Pierre G...” or “Pierre V...” in the press) was a former camp comrade of rural origins whom Jacques took into his service in Paris after his abridged military service (see “Grave affaire de moeurs” in L’Aurore 12 July 1903, p. 1; “Messes Noires” in Le Matin 12 July 1903, p. 2; “Un scandale” in Le Temps 12 July 1903, p. [3]; “Le scandale de l’Avenue de Friedland” in La Lanterne 13 July 1903, p. 1).
During the trial, d’Adelswärd mentioned the writers he was introduced to at school, and whose works he most admired: Virgil, Plato, Theocritus, Shakespeare, and Huysmans. There he had found, in colourful and poetical descriptions, the same things which occurred in his presence (see Grandgousier, “Un procès à huis clos. Les Messes Noires,” loc. cit.; “Messes Noires” in La Lanterne 29 November 1903, p. 3; Renard, “Gazette Judiciaire. Scènes antiques” in Gil Bias 29 November 1903, p. [2]; “L’Affaire des Messes Noires” in L’Ouest-Eclair et l’Étoile de la Mer 29 November 1903, p. 5; “Les deux barons” in Le Petit Parisien 29 November 1903, p. 3; “Les deux barons” in Le Petit Parisien 29 November 1903, p. 3; “L’Affaire d’Adelswärd” in Le Presses 29 November 1903, p. 1; “Premières Nouvelles du Palais. Scènes antiques” in Le Temps 29 November 1903, p. [4]; “Moeurs antiques” in La Lanterne 30 November 1903, p. 2; “Les Tribunaux. L’affaire d’Adelswärd-de Warren” in Le Rappel 30 November 1903, p. [2]; “Tribunaux. Le procès d’Adelswärd-de Warren” in L’Aurore 4 December 1903, p. 3). N. Erber, op. cit., p. 199, adds the names of Baudelaire and Verlaine, and that Judge Bondoux had interjected: “Very unhealthy literature (Cette littérature était bien malsaine).” (See: M. Delavigne, “Le scandale de l’avenue Friedland” in Le Journal 29 November 1903, p. 2). In a letter to an unknown addressee (Trouville-sur-Mer, 26 September 1902), now in the collection of Raimondo Biffi in Rome, d’Adelswärd already mentioned the authors Heinrich Heine, Alphonse de Lamartine, François de Malherbe, Clément Marot, Alfred de Musset, Pierre Rondard, Albert Samain, and François Villon (pseudonym of François de Montcorbier). According to Paul Morand and Jean Lorrain, another source of inspiration of d’Adelswärd was the writer François de Croisset (pseudonym of Franz Wiener), who had published a volume of poetry, Les Nuits de Quinze Ans, in 1898 (Paris: Ollendorff). Morand had discovered a copy of the book in his father’s library, and, in 1959, he remembered to have been confused as a twelve-year-old boy by its “cover, with nude interlaced figures in the bluish.” (See Paul Morand and Jacques Chardonne, op. cit., p. 751; “lecture favorite de votre Fersen; la couverture, avec des corps nus enlacés dans le bleutaire, troublait mes 12 ans.”; J. Lorrain, “Le Baron d’Adelswärd à Venise” in Le Journal 2 August 1903, p. 3). See also Note 32.

Or, as the prosecution lawyer, Lescouvé, put it in his requisitory: “a young ephèbe (…) completely naked, or insufficiently dressed in a silk scarf (un jeune ephèbe (…) complètement nu, ou insuffisamment vêtu d’une écharpe de soie).” See M. Delavigne, “Le scandale de l’avenue Friedland” in Le Journal 29 November 1903, p. 2, and 4 December 1903, p. 1.

Achille Essebac attended the Messe Noire of 17 or 18 May, and confirmed Jacques’ contention: during his visits to “representations of a special mysticism, organised by Jacques d’Adelswärd,” he had never noticed anything scandalous nor something which could be interpreted as an attack on morality. During the Messe Noire of 17 or 18 May “youngsters, dressed in peplums and wearing cothurni, played on ancient flutes or strewed flowers,” whereas “a young man was resting on a bed (…), covered with a scarf of gauze, and d’Adelswärd was reciting La Mort des Amants.” It was “marvellous, paradiac, without any indecency,” Essebac concluded. “So, you see!” d’Adelswärd triumphantly exclaimed to de Valles (see Notes 48, 92). The same tenor is to be found in Arthur Dupin’s article, “Les Dégénérés” in Le Journal 13 July 1903, p. 3, in a quote (borrowed from Le Français) of a “friend of Jacques d’Adelswärd” (perhaps Essebac himself): the youngster on the bed was “in his twenties,” “it was artistic,” and “no minors present.” See also “Les Dégénérés” in Le Journal 28 July 1903, p. 2; M. Delavigne, “Le scandale de l’avenue Friedland” in Le Journal 29 November 1903, p. 2.

Count Etchegoyen was mentioned as a guest of d’Adelswärd in “Informations - Mondanités” in Le Journal 5 March 1903, p. 2. The dossier and the press (see for instance “Le scandale de l’Avenue de Friedland” in La Lanterne 13 July 1903, p. 1) mentioned another priest (who might have visited some of the gatherings): fifty-five-year-old Abbé Jean Baptiste Labeyrie, a former vicar of Saint-Philippe-du-Roule in Paris, and “nowadays Chaplain of the Military Hospital at Vincennes.” Because of his visits to the public toilets on the Boulevard Haussmann, the Rue Tronchet, and the Avenue des Champs-Elysées, Labeyrie had a reputation for pederasty, and he had already been subject of surveillance by the police. For many years he had been the private teacher of de Warren and his brother. In his home,
the police seized about fifty letters of the fugitive de Warren, addressed to his teacher. In the letters, de Warren was on first-name terms with Labeyrie; he called him his very dear friend, expressed an ardent desire to have him near himself, and sent his “kisses” and his “caresses.” In “Scandaleuse affaire” in Le Petit Parisien 14 July 1903, p. 2, Labeyrie tried to explain away de Warren’s way of addressing him: “He speaks to me like a suffering child would speak to his father.” To de Valles he said: “This can only be interpreted as a quasi filial affection of a pupil towards his teacher.” At the same time he emphasized that he did not know d’Adelswärd personally, which was confirmed by d’Adelswärd himself (see “Nouvelles Diverses. À Paris” in Le Figaro 26 July 1903, p. 4; “Nouvelles Diverses. Paris” in Le Journal 26 July 1903, p. 6; “Messes Noires” in Le Matin 26 July 1903, p. 2; “Faits divers. Un scandale” in Le Temps 27 July 1903, p. [3]; “Le scandale de l’Avenue Friedland” in La Lanterne 28 July 1903, p. 2; and also Louis Schneider, “La Paroisse de Vincennes” in Gil Blas 24 December 1906, pp. [1-2]).


The “classe de rhétorique” was, except one, the highest form of the French lyceum. Besnard was probably one of the younger sons of the famous painter Paul-Albert Besnard (1849-1934), who married the sculptress Charlotte Dubray in 1879. They had three sons: Robert (1881-1914), who became a painter, married in 1903, and was killed in battle at the beginning of the First World War; Philippe (1885-1971), who became a sculptor; and Jean (1889-1958), a boy of delicate health because of tuberculosis. Their father had made a portrait of d’Adelswärd’s mother (the painting is reproduced by Viveka Adelswärd, op. cit., p. 70); he refused to appear when summoned by de Valles for interrogation (see “À Travers Paris. Le scandale de l’avenue Friedland” in Gil Blas 25 July 1903, p. [3]; “Le scandale de l’Avenue Friedland” in La Lanterne 26 July 1903, p. 2; “Messes Noires” in Le Matin 24 July 1903, p. 4 and 28 July 1903, p. 4; “Scandaleuse affaire” in Le Petit Parisien 25 July 1903, p. 4). Probably the “portrait en pied du jeune baron, signé d’un peintre connu,” a life-sized painting of Jacques himself, mentioned in the press (Arthur Dupin, “Un scandale” in Le Journal 11 July 1903, p. 2; “Grave affaire de mœurs” in L’Aurore 12 July 1903, p. 1; “Un scandale” in Le Temps 12 July 1903, p. [3]; “Pornographie mondaine” in Le Rappel 13 July 1903, p. [1]), was also made by Besnard. A nice portrait of the Besnard family, “Une famille” (1890), is now in the Musée d’Orsay at Paris. The article “Nouvelles Diverses. À Paris. À l’Instruction” in Le Figaro 24 July 1903, p. 4, noted that the boy too did not respond to a confrontation at de Valles’ office (see also “Nouvelles Diverses. Paris” in Le Journal 24 July 1903, p. 6; “Le scandale de l’Avenue Friedland” in La Lanterne 24 July 1903, p. 1). However, the young Besnard later denied all allegations, whereas his father declared to have not in the least been upset by the spectacles at Avenue Friedland (see “La folie érotique” in Le Rappel 26 July 1903, p. [3]; “Messes Noires” in Le Matin 28 July 1903, p. 4; “Faits divers. Paris. À l’Instruction” in Le Petit Parisien 28 July 1903, p. 3; Grandgousier, “Un procès à huis clos. Les Messes Noires” in Le Matin 29 November 1903, p. 1).

Probably the “eighteen-year-old lycéen, named M…” mentioned by René Racot in “Le Scandale de l’Avenue Friedland” in Gil Blas 19 July 1903, p. [4]. Several newspapers noted the declaration of young Méandré: that he had never assisted at scandalous scenes; he had only been present at “messe blanches” (White Masses), including the meeting of 17 or 18 May, at which nothing immoral or indecent had happened (see “Nouvelles Diverses. À Paris” in Le Figaro 25 July 1903, p. 3; “Nouvelles Diverses. Paris” in Le Journal 25 July 1903, p. 4; “Messes Noires” in Le Matin 25 July 1903, p. 4; “À Travers Paris. Le scandale de l’avenue Friedland” in Gil Blas 26 July 1903, p. [3]; “La folie érotique” in Le Rappel 26 July 1903, p. [3]; “Nouvelles Diverses. À Paris” in Le Figaro 28 July 1903, p. 4; “Messes Noires” in Le Matin 28 July 1903, p. 4). However, according to the article “Les Dégénérés” in Le Journal 28 July 1903, p. 2, the “son of a well-known doctor,” together with a pupil of the Lycée Janson-de-Sailly, had testified that d’Adelswärd had “made them take off their clothes, just like all the children who had assisted at the feast (que Jacques d’Adelswärd leur avait fait quitter leurs vêtements, ainsi qu’à tous les enfants qui avaient assisté à la fête).”


See also Note 72. According to Norman Douglas, Looking Back: An Autobiographical Excursion (London: Chatto and Windus, 1934), pp. 358-364, d’Adelswärd was a talented drawer.

Also mentioned by Arthur Dupin, “Un scandale” in Le Journal 11 July 1903, p. 2.

It was already noticed in “À Travers Paris. Le scandale de l’avenue Friedland” in Gil Blas 17 July 1903, p. [3].


Due to a transcription error, Jean-Claude Féray, “L’exilé de Capri: un portrait très retouché” in Inverses. Littératures, Arts et Homosexualités 4 (2004), pp. 209-215, transposes the prominent role of Loulou Locrè to Jacques Croisé de Pourcelet. However, the document of 12 July 1903 does not read “… seraient lesJacques Locrè, Boesch, de Laguerre, Starceli, …” but “… seraient les jeunes Locret, Boesch, de Laguerre, Starceli, …” A Jacques Locrè/Locret did not exist! The name Loulou means “doggie” or “darling.”

Only a résumé of an interview of Henri Boesch is to be found in a document of 20 July 1903.
“Scandaleuse affaire” in Le Petit Parisien 17 July 1903, p. 3; “Les Dégénérés” in Le Journal 17 July 1903, p. 3. Jacques seems to have been obsessed with death, which is understandable when we consider that, as an eighteen-year-old boy, he had already lost at least seven close relatives (between 1881 and 1898); his grandmother Amélie, his young brother, his uncle Vühler, his father, his uncle Gustave d’Adelswärd, and two grandfathers. The obsession with death was also noticed in the press; see for instance “Échos” in L’Aurore 14 July 1903, p. 1; Arthur Dupin. “Les Dégénérés” in Le Journal 14 July 1903, p. 5; “Le roman d’un névrosé” in Le Matin 14 July 1903, p. 2; Fernand Hauser, “Adelsward intime” in La Presse 14 July 1903, p. 1; “La folie érotique” in Le Rappel 15 July 1903, p. [2]; “Le scandale de l’Étoile” in La Lanterne 16 July 1903, p. 2.

“Les deux barons” in Le Petit Parisien 29 November 1903, p. 4.


About the suicide attempt a lot of contradictory information is to be found in for instance “Le suicide du baron d’Adelsward?” in Gil Blas 11 December 1903, p. [3]; “Le Baron d’Adelsward” in Le Journal 11 December 1903, p. 4; “Faits divers. Le cas du baron d’Adelsward” in L’Aurore 12 December 1903, p. 3; “Nouvelles Diverses. À Paris” in Le Figaro 12 December 1903, p. 4; “Faits divers. Le désespoir d’Adelsward” in Gil Blas 12 December 1903, p. [3]; “Le Baron d’Adelsward” in Le Journal 12 December 1903, p. 3; “Les Messes Noires” in L’Ouest-Eclair et l’Étoile de la Mer 12 December 1903, p. 1; “Le Baron d’Adelsward” in Le Petit Parisien 12 December 1903, p. 1; “Le suicide de l’Adelsward” in La Presse 12 December 1903, p. [2]; “Il tentato suicidio del barone Adelsward, il protagonista del processo della Messa Nera” in La Stampa. Gazzetta Piemontese 12 December 1903, p. 3; “Le Baron d’Adelsward” in Le Journal 13 December 1903, p. 6: in the park of the de Maupeou family castle at Hombourg near Mulhouse (Alsace), Jacques had put a revolver at his temple and had fainting after firing. A doctor had lent first aid upon which Jacques had regained consciousness; he is said to have been brought in “a butcher’s van” or “a woodman’s van” to his hotel at Mulhouse. The injury turned out to be not very grave: the bullet had entered his right temple, slid down the frontal bone, and had left the head below his eye. Jacques returned to Paris 11 December 1903. In “Faits Divers” in Le Temps 16 December 1903, p. [3], d’Adelswärd rectified “certain details” (being “pure fantasies”) in the press coverage of his attempt. To La Presse, Hombourg (Haut-Rhin) must have sounded like a place in a foreign country, for the village is mixed up with Hamburg in Germany (see “Le Baron d’Adelsward” in La Presse 13 December 1903, p. 2). Quoting the local newspaper, L’Express de Mulhouse, several newspapers added an interesting detail: before he went to Hombourg, d’Adelsward had booked the Hotel Central at Mulhouse with the name Jacques Liéven (see “M. d’Adelsward. L’Épilogue des «Messes Noires” in Le Matin 12 December 1903, p. 1; “La tentative de suicide du baron d’Adelsward” in Le Figaro 14 December 1903, p. 4; “Le Baron d’Adelsward” in Le Journal 14 December 1903, p. 4; “Le Baron d’Adelsward” in Le Temps 14 December 1903, p. [3]; “L’Affaire d’Adelsward” in La Lanterne 15 December 1903, p. 2; and Note 78).


See “Scandaleuse affaire” in Le Petit Parisien 13 July 1903, p. 3. The article concluded: “Actually this noble lady is astonished of the fact that a young man with 40,000 francs of income does not have the right to satisfy his likings, his passions, even his vices.” Also to be found in “Échos” in L’Aurore 14 July 1903, p. 1; “Grave affaire de meurs” in L’Aurore 14 July 1903, p. 2; R. [acot], “Le Scandale de l’Avenue Friedland” in Gil Blas 14 July 1903, p. [3]; “Le scandale de l’Avenue de Friedland” in La Lanterne 15 July 1903, p. 2, and “La folie érotique” in Le Rappel 15 July 1903, p. [2].

Viveka Adelswärd, op. cit., p. 102: “exporteras till Amerika eller Australien der han ju möjlig kan om han vill söka rehabilitera sig kan komma in som medarbetare i någon tidning eller dylikt.” The photo on the undated post card (fig. 21) must have been made during “Les grandes manoeuvres de l’Est” in the Autumn of 1904 (see “Informations - L’Armée” in Le Journal 1 September 1904, p. 5).

J. Money, op. cit., pp. 86-88. Nino Cesarini, Jacques’ later boy-friend, is recognizable in the novel, Vestal Fire, in the person of Carlo di Fiore, and Villa Lysis (named from Plato’s dialogue on “the good” as the ultimate goal of all human desires) is called Villa Hylas, after the beloved of Herakles. E. [L.] Prime-Stevenson, “Out of the Sun” in Her Enemy, Some Friends - and Other Personages: Stories & Studies Mostly of Human Hearts (Florence: Obsner, 1913). In the


110 According to Jacques’ last will, Nino was born in Rome 30 September 1889 (see F. Esposito, I mistieri di Villa Lysis. Testamento e morte di Jacques Fersen, Capri: Edizioni La Conchiglia, 1996, p. 62), although his gravestone has 29 September 1889 (see J. Desse, “Nino et son jumeau. Visages et mythes de l’ami de Jacques d’Adelswärd-Fersen.” (2012), (http://issuu.com/gloeden-pluschow-galdi/docs/nnocesarinini), p. [10], and Note 155). According to R. Peyrefitte, op. cit., pp. 137-142, they met each other for the first time 9 July 1904, one year after Jacques’ arrest in Paris. This must be a romantic invention of Peyrefitte! Compared with a number of recently discovered letters of d’Adelswärd to Édouard Chimot, now in the collection of Raimondo Biffi in Rome, Peyrefitte’s story of d’Adelswärd’s 1904 itinerary turns out to be rather dubious. According to Peyrefitte, op. cit., pp. 126-128, Jacques departed to the Far East in February, and returned to Capri on 14 May. However, an undated letter, sent from the steamer “Sachsen” (China Sea), documents that d’Adelswärd went from Ceylon to Signapure, Penau (or: Penaoe, a small island in the Dutch East Indies), Hong Kong, Shanghai, Peking, Japan. According to a letter of 4 August 1904, sent from the steamer “Doric” (North Pacific Ocean), he had left Yokohama on 20 July, visited Hawaii on 30 July, and he expected to arrive in San Francisco on 8 August. On his journey through the United States, partly by “sleeping car,” he intended to pass St. Louis in order to embark for Naples on 2 September. A letter to Chimot of 24 September 1904 testifies that Jacques was back in Europe by then. So, the meeting with Nino in Rome on 9 July seems to be not very plausible, hence must have happened much earlier or at a later moment that year. Photos of the “Sachsen” and the “Doric” are to be found in Will H.L. Ogrinc, “Nouvelles concernant les Adelswärd et la mer” in Bulletin mensuel Quines-feuilles 23 (2014), p. 6 (http://www.quines-feuilles.com/wp-content/uploads/Novembre-2014.pdf).


112 J. d’Adelswärd-Fersen, Une Jeunesse/Le Baiser de Narcisse (Paris: Léon Vanier/Albert Messein, 1907); Rachilde “Une Jeunesse” in Mercure de France 69:248 (16 October 1907), p. 700. The Uranian and expert on witchcraft, Montague Summers (1880-1948), wrote with great sympathy about d’Adelswärd and even dedicated a collection of his poetry to him, Antinous and Other Poems (London: Sisleys’, [1907]). He incorrectly wrote that the novela took place in Venice, whereas it actually was set near Taormina and in Verona. See M. Summers, The Galantry Show. An Autobiography by Montague Summers (London: Cecil Woolf, 1980), p. 236. Summers also was a secretary to the department for the study of homosexuality of the British Society for the Study of Sex Psychology (see also Note 126). The supposition made by T. d’Arch Smith, op. cit., p. 156, that Rachilde (pseudonym of Marguerite Aymery Vallette) used Jacques’ name for the two incestuous homosexual brothers Fertzen in her novel, Les Hors nature. Moeurs contemporaines (Paris: Mercure de France, 1897), must be corrected: in 1897 Jacques had not yet acquired his “reputation!” Possibly Rachilde was referring to Hans Axel von Fersen (see Note 20).

113 For a description of Brunelleschi’s painting, see F. Esposito, op. cit., p. 91. For reproductions of the statue of Nino cast by Francesco Ierace, see J. Money, op. cit., p. 95; P. Cardon (ed.), Dossiers Jacques d’Adelsward-Fersen (Lille: Cahiers Gai-Kitsch-Camp 21, Curiosa 3, 1993), p. 14; A la Jeunesse d’Amour, op. cit., pp. 36 (photo by Guglielmo Plüschow), 37, 46-47; Amori et Dolori Sacrum, introd. by Roger Peyrefitte (Capri: Libreria «La Conchiglia», 1990), pp. 23 and 45; T.G. Natter and P. Weiermair (eds.), Et in Arcadia ego (Zürich: Oehrli, 2000), pp. 18 and 19 (photos by Guglielmo Plüschow!). R. Peyrefitte, L’Esde di Capri (Capri: Edizioni La Conchiglia, 2003), [no pagination], includes reproductions of a photo of the statue by Ierace, and photos of Nino by Guglielmo Plüschow (c. 1906) which seem to have been used by Ierace as a model for his statue. These photos are also reproduced in A la Jeunesse d’Amour, op. cit., p. 101-102, and in P. Weiermair, Guglielmo Plüschow (Köln: Benedikt Taschen, 1993), pp. 30 and 33. The photo of Nino on the terrace is to be found in A la Jeunesse d’Amour, op. cit., p. 103, Amori et Dolori Sacrum, op. cit., p. 41, and M. Hirschfeld, Geschlechtskunde. IV (Stuttgart: Julius Püttmann, 1930), p. 632. With respect to the photo, the same symbols - although in mirror image - can be found on a drinking vessel from the First
Century B.C. on which Emperor Augustus is shown in all his majesty, and on a Fourth Century A.D. coin on which Emperor Constantius II is depicted as Perpetuus Augustus. The closest resemblance with the photo is found in Second and Third Century A.D. depictions of Zeus Nicephorus, see A. Dimitrova-Milcheva, Antique Engraved Gems and Cameos in the National Archeological Museum in Sofia (Sofia: Septemviri Publishing House, 1981), pp. 32-33, Nrs. 13-14a. The photo differs in the following respects: standing posture, lack of scepter, and a Christian cross around Nino's neck. Recently there has been published a reproduction of a painting of Nino (c. 1908) by the German artist Paul Höcker, which is now in the private collection of Inka Nero in Switzerland (see Goodbye to Berlin? 100 Jahre Schwundenbewegung. Berlin: Verlag rosa Winkel, 1997, pp. 62, 78-79). Nino, more or less undressed, was painted several times by Höcker. One of these paintings, “Roman Youngster,” appeared on the title page of Number 26 of the magazine Jugend (1904) (see also: A. Sternweiler (ed.), Selbstbeswusstein und Beharrlichkeit. Zehnhundert Jahre Geschichte, Berlin: Schwules Museum, 2004, pp. 69-70). Fausto Esposito, loc. cit., describes another painting of a dressed Nino, hanging in the “camera goyesca” of Villa Lysis, and signed with “Paul.” In 1897 Höcker had fled to Italy, when it became common knowledge in Germany that he had used a rent boy from Munich, with whom he had an intimate relationship, as a model for a painting of a Madonna.


118 The use of opium - following the Chinese Chandu method - was very popular with a number of artists, especially since the drug was easily obtainable in European chemist’s shops, even after the First World War. W. Schmidbauer and J. vom Scheidt, Handbuch der Rauschdrogen (München: Nymphenburger, 1975), pp. 139-146, states that the smoking of 20 to 40 pipes (6 to 7 grams) per day was common for the average user (10 grams of opium contain approximately 1 gram morphine, of which 0.2 to 0.3 grams come directly into the blood with smoking). A. Hayther, Opium and the Romantic Imagination (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), goes deeply into the influence which the drug had on various artists. Jacques’ attraction to this particular drug can be explained in part by the fact that from ancient times opium has been used in various mystery cults and initiation ceremonies. The use of opium - following the Chinese Chandu method - was very popular with a number of artists, especially since the drug was easily obtainable in European chemist’s shops, even after the First World War. W. Schmidbauer and J. vom Scheidt, Handbuch der Rauschdrogen (München: Nymphenburger, 1975), pp. 139-146, states that the smoking of 20 to 40 pipes (6 to 7 grams) per day was common for the average user (10 grams of opium contain approximately 1 gram morphine, of which 0.2 to 0.3 grams come directly into the blood with smoking). A. Hayther, Opium and the Romantic Imagination (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), goes deeply into the influence which the drug had on various artists. Jacques’ attraction to this particular drug can be explained in part by the fact that from ancient times opium has been used in various mystery cults and initiation ceremonies.

119 For reproductions of the photo of the Neapolitan boy, see: À la Jeunesse d’Amour, op. cit., p. 43, E. Cooper, Fully Exposed. The Male Nude in Photography (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), p. 157, P. Weiermair, op. cit., p. 69, Amori et Dolori Sacram, op. cit., pp. 31 and 39 (divided into two parts!), and R. Peyrefitte, op. cit., [no pagination]. In the early 1870s the German Guglielmo (= Wilhelm Eduard Hermann Gottlieb) Plüschow lived as a photographer in Naples (Mergellina district). Between 1892 and 1909 he operated in Rome. In the aftermath of the Krupp scandal, he was accused of sexual match-making, the seduction of minors, and the production and distribution of “obscene” photos. He was arrested 14 May 1907 because he had made photos of a twelve-year-old Roman boy, Ernani Marinelli, in “a pose not in accordance with the laws of decency” (see: “L’arresto di un fotografo tedesco” in Il Messaggero 15 May 1907, p. 4; “Il fotografo arrestato” in La Tribuna 16 May 1907, p. 3; “Un fotografo corruttore” in La Tribuna 15 May 1907; “Il fotografo tedesco arrestato” in Il Messaggero 16 May 1907, p. 4; “Un processo scandaloso” in Il Messaggero 15 June 1907; “Fotocorritori” in Bollettino della Lega per la Moralità Pubblica 13:2, 1908, pp. 6-7; and L. Ferriani, “E lo scandalo del fotografo?” in Battaglie d’oggi 3:14, 1907, pp. 1-2). During the police raid of Plüschow’s apartment, a famous German concert singer was found in his home with a young “civis [= civis] romanus” (Roman citizen) in a compromising situation (see Xavier Mayne, The Intersexes. A History of Similisexualism as Problem in Social Life, Naples: [Privately printed, c.1910], p. 486). Recently Enrico Oliari has published the complete transcription of the sentence of the Corte Penale di Roma of 4 April 1908 (see E. Oliari, L’Omo Delinquente. Scandali e delitti gay dall’Unità a Giolitti, Civitavecchia-Roma: Prospettiva editrice, 2006, pp. 203-214; also published on the Internet at http://www.oliari.com/ricercer/sentenzapbloeschow.html). Xavier Mayne’s “civis romanus” can now be identified as the Roman boy, Amedeo Moretti, and the German concert singer, “Dott[ore] Wulmer Luigi,” must be Dr. Ludwig Wullner (1858-1938) (see Spemanns goldenes Buch der Musik, Berlin-Stuttgart: Verlag W. Spemann, 1900, Nr. 1390, which also contains a photo of the concert singer). Plüschow was sentenced to seven months and fifteen days prison, and a big fine. After 1910 he returned to Germany (see U. Pohlmann, Guglielmo Plüschow (1852-1930). Ein Photograph aus Mecklenburg in Italien, Grevesmühlen: NWM-Verlag, 1995, pp. 8-11). Reproductions of Plüschow’s photos, possibly representing Nino, are to be found in the following books: U. Pohlmann, op. cit., Inv. Nr. 89/74-84 “Rückenakt eines männlichen Modells” (Nude back of a male model); Inv. Nr. 89/74-78 “Porträt eines jungen Mannes” (Portrait of a young man); and Inv. Nr. 89/13-45 “Männlicher Akt mit ‘Heiligenschein’” (Male nude with a ‘nimbus’). The latter is also reproduced in À la Jeunesse d’Amour, op. cit., p. 100, Amori et Dolori Sacram, op. cit., p. 35, on the cover of F. Esposito, op. cit., in R. Peyrefitte, op. cit., [no pagination], in P. Weiermair, op. cit., the first photo of the book, and in Viveka Adelswärd, op. cit., p. 120. According to Pohlmann, these photos are from about 1900, which seems to be dated too early. However, Jacques Desse, op. cit., p. [22], has recently discovered that “Männlicher Akt mit
“Heiligenschein” had already been published in 1902 (see C. Klary, La Photographie du Nu, Paris: C. Klary, 1902); hence the photo cannot possibly represent Nino since the boy was only thirteen at that time. D. Leddick, The Male Nude (Köln: Taschen, 1998), p. 134, reproduces a photo of Nino as a nude Roman soldier, and in Wilhelm von Gloeden, Wilhelm von Plüschow, Vincenzo Galdi. Italienische Jünglings-Photographien um 1900 (Berlin: Janssen, 1991), p. 37, we can find a nude back-pose of Nino, playing with a tambourine. The Italian edition of R. Peyrefitte, op. cit., has more photos of Nino by Plüschow, including several nudes (c. 1906). These are also to be found in À la Jeunesse d’Amour, op. cit., pp. 99, 104-105 (see also P. Weermair, op. cit., pp. 10, 13, 21, 91).

A copy of the frontal nude (Figure 28) apparently was in Peyrefitte’s private collection; it has recently been reproduced in R. Peyrefitte, Wilhelm von Gloeden: Biographie. Avec un cahier de 50 nus masculins (Paris: Éditions Textes Gais, 2008), p. [99].

J.-C. Féray, loc. cit. If the supposition, made by Féray, is correct, it casts a new and less romantic light on the acquaintance than in Peyrefitte’s novel (see also Note 110): Nino would be one of the boys possibly exploited by Plüschow. The editors of À la Jeunesse d’Amour, op. cit., p. 12, claim that Nino already was a model of Plüschow, and Féray’s supposition seems to be additionally supported: in the above-mentioned sentence of the Corte Penale di Roma (Note 119), we can find a quote from the seized correspondence of Plüschow, in which a certain Geoffray is looking at a photo of Nino (Cesarini?), and recalls the beautiful moments he had with the boy: “Stamane ho avuto la sorpresa di trovare fra la mia posta la meravigliosa fotografia di Nino e ne sono rimasto in estasi. Quanto è bello e quali dolci ricordi mi ha risvegliato in quel momento.” Another boy, Rodolfo Consorti, testified that he was introduced by Plüschow in Capi to the “notoriamente sospetto pederasta passivo” (evidently suspect passive pederast) Fersen, who had made “proposte oscene” (obscene proposals) which the boy had rejected (see E. Oliari, op. cit., pp. 210-211). From all this, it seems obvious that Plüschow was not only selling photos, but also supplying boys.


A. Andrén, op. cit., p. 161. “Le triste héros des messes noires Jacques d’Adelsward meurt mystérieusement à Capri” in Le Matin 10 December 1923, p. 1, prints sensationalist reports from the local rumor mill: the residents of Capri crossed themselves when strange sounds and lights came from similar nocturnal “orgies” held in Villa Lysis. During the Plüschow scandal (see Note 119), the Italian press even referred to a note of the Carabinieri of 7 June 1907: in his “small villa at Capri (…), D.F.” (= De Fersen) not only received “molti ragazzi” (many boys); “celebrations, all this, it seems obvious that Plüschow was not only selling photos, but also supplying boys.

See Note 111. According to Edwin Cerio (L’Ora di Capri, Capri: La Conchiglia, 2000, pp. 208-209), the course of events had turned out differently: the performance was brutally terminated by the police. The preparations of the celebration had raised suspicions of the local priest, who feared for an orgy, and the mayor, who hoped for a scandal: “So when, one night, the whole heretical and erotic company of the island disappeared into the grotto by torchlight, for the mayor, who hoped for a scandal: “So when, one night, the whole heretical and erotic company of the island disappeared into the grotto by torchlight, for the preparation of the celebration were brutal terminised by the police. The preparations of the celebration had raised suspicions of the local priest, who feared for an orgy, and the mayor, who hoped for a scandal: “So when, one night, the whole heretical and erotic company of the island disappeared into the grotto by torchlight, for the preparation of the celebration were brutal terminised by the police. The preparations of the celebration had raised suspicions of the local priest, who feared for an orgy, and the mayor, who hoped for a scandal: “So when, one night, the whole heretical and erotic company of the island disappeared into the grotto by torchlight, for the preparation of the celebration were brutal terminised by the police. 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a friend of d’Adelswärd and a visitor of Villa Lysis (see C. Spiess, *Mon Autopsie. Éjaculations autobiographiques*, Nice: Athanor, 1938, pp. 109-112, 129). Raimondo Biffi (http://www.multimania.com/gir/fersen.htm) suggested that d’Adelswärd also might have been a member of the “Order of Chaeronea.” The name of this worldwide secret society was inspired by the battle of Chaeronea in 338 B.C., when 300 members of the Sacred Band of Thebes (composed entirely of friends and lovers) were slaughtered by the army of Philip of Macedonia. The Order was founded in 1897 by the homosexual Edwardian poet and author, George Cecil Ives (1867-1950), co-founder of the British Society for the Study of Sex Psychology (1914), and most famous of his study *The Graeco-Roman View of Youth* (London: Cayme Press, 1926). Its aim was to promote the end of the oppression of homosexuals.

127 The following are some of the best known names: Paul Adam, Henri Barbusse, Maurice Barrès, Jules Bois, Norman Douglas, Georges Ezhkoud, Achille Essebac, Claude Farrère, Jean Ferval (pseudonym of Roger Charbonnel), Anatole France, Henry Gauthier-Villars and his wife Colette Willy (pseudonym of Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette), Maxim Gorky (pseudonym of Alexey Maximovich Peshkov), Robert d’Humières, Pierre Loti, Maurice Maeterlinck, F.T. Marinetti, Octave Mirbeau, Robert de Montesquieu, Jean Moréas, Joséphin Péladan, Laurent Tailhade and his close friend Robert Scheffer, Émile Verhaeren, Renée Vivien, Eugene (sic) [Daniel] Wilhelm. For any more detailed information of the magazine, see the article of Paul Snijders, op. cit., pp. 139-141.


129 “Inaugural” and “Notre But” (Our Aim) in *Akademos* 1:1 (1909), pp. 1-2, 113. Though he was listed as a collaborator, Norman Douglas (1868-1952), op. cit., p. 363, knew only this issue of the magazine. J. Money, op. cit., pp. 109, 311-312, knew of ten of the twelve issues but only consulted six.


133 Although, on 10 May 1909, d’Adelswärd was still confident, and even intended a bimonthly publication of the magazine (starting in January 1910), in the same letter to Georges Ezhkoud (who made several contributions to *Akademos*) he complained about the “ludicrous rarity” of subscriptions, and that he felt himself abandoned by other “adoniens” (worshippers of Adonis) who, out of fear, had turned their back upon him (“perhaps by custom?” Jacques added with a sneer), instead of helping him. See P. Cardon (ed.), op. cit., pp. 66-67. The letter is part of a post card (and a post card for New-Year 1908) from d’Adelswärd to Eekhoud, preserved in the Royal Library Albert I, Archives et Musée de la Littérature, at Brussels. A reproduction of the post card is to be found in M. Lucien (ed.), op. cit., p. 142.


137 Or “Toutpanse” (see “En banlieue” in *Le Matin* 6 May 1910, p. 5). “Nouvelles Diverses” in *Le Journal* 6 May 1910, p. 6, has “Antoine Césarim” as the driver.

138 “Déplacements et Villégiatures des Abonnés du «Figaro»” in *Le Figaro* 27 August 1910, p. 5. R. Peyrefitte, op. cit., p. 251; the stay at Nice is not mentioned in the press articles I found.

Photographers of the Orient” in Le Figaro lists Jacques’ sojourn at Kandy (Ceylon/Sri Lanka), Benares (India), Batavia (Dutch East Indies), and Hong Kong (see “Déplacements et Villégiatures des Abonnés du «Figaro»” in Le Figaro 27 October 1910, p. 7; 2 December 1910, p. 7; 17 December 1910, p. 7; 16 February 1911, p. 7).

According to R. Peyrefitte, op. cit., pp. 254, 257-261, before they went on to the Far East, the trip with Jacques’ yacht “Orta” took them, along the Italian coast, to Greece, Algeria and Tunisia. A photograph of the “Orta” is to be found in Viveka Adelsvärd, op. cit., p. 129. The trip is partly confirmed by a certain “DnN461”. On the Internet he wrote: “Je recherche tout renseignement sur le “steam-yacht” ORTA. Son propriétaire était le comte Jacques d’Adelswärd-Fersen. Mon Grd-père était matelot à bord du 4 sept. 1911 au 13 déc. 1911. Il débarque à Corfou pour se rendre en France accomplir son service militaire.” See Message Nr. 37364, posted 16 May 2013, 09:14:17 (http://pages14.mesdiscussions.net/pages1418/Forum-Pages-d-Histoire-aviation-marine/marine-1914-1918/yachtmen-immediat-guerre-sujet_3194_1.htm): his grandfather had been a sailor of the “Orta” from September to December 1911; he had left the yacht at the isle of Corfu.  


J.H. van Epen, Compendium Drugverslaving en Alcoholisme. Diagnostiek en behandeling (Amsterdam: Agon/Elsevier, 1974), p. 90, cites Sigmund Freud’s experiments with curing opium addiction by administering cocaine. This resulted in the patient becoming psychotic. On Gemito, see my article “Street statues of a nude ephebe on a pedestal of agate, made by Gemito. In a new edition of an Italian translation (1959) of L’Exilé de Capri, we can find a portrait by Gemito (1920) of a moustached Nino with a turban, now in the collection of Lino Maesano (see: R. Peyrefitte, L’Esule di Capri, back of the cover, and À la Jeunesse d’Amour, op. cit., p. 107). J. Money, op. cit., pp. 124-126, 134, has d’Adelsvärd undertake in 1913/14 another trip to the Far East, with Nino and some female friends from the colonry at Capri. This trip is only mentioned by E.F. Benson and Compton Mackenzie and is probably based upon fantasy.

“Oppiarum” (“Della vita e della morte del barone di Fersen” in Il Mattino 8/9 December 1923). In 2010, a frontal nude (made by an unknown photographer) of d’Adelsvärd himself, reclining in his Opiazium, was for sale on the Internet. The photograph is partly reproduced in J. Desse, op. cit., p. [6], and Viveka Adelsvärd, op. cit., p. 15. An uncensored version was to be found at the Jacques d’Adelsvärd Fersen Appreciation Group (https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=104353689578527&set=o.40311732882&type=3&theater).

R. Peyrefitte, Propos Secrets 2, p. 355. J. Money, op. cit., pp. 159, 170, describes Nino after 1918 as a young man who “at last” was set on the straight and narrow path through his war experiences; he was not only decorated with the Cross of War but seems to have suddenly taken on Anglo-Saxon morals. He is supposed to have stayed with d’Adelsvärd only out of compassion for the “madman”; “they were now ‘just friends,’ and Fersen’s attempts to revive the old sexual relationship were rejected.” This is a concatenation, perhaps based upon wishful thinking, of absurdities and suspicions presented as fact which is based in no respect upon existing documentation. Above all, because of Jacques’ preference for ephebes, we may assume that the sexual component of the relationship had ended years before.


R. Peyrefitte, loc. cit. A copy of La Neuvaine du petit faune is in the collection of Alexandre de Villiers (Peyrefitte’s godson and executor of his last will). It is not clear whether this is the original manuscript, given by Corrado to his friends Romolo Valle and Giorgio de Lullo, directors of the Teatro Eliseo in Rome, with whom Peyrefitte spoke on Capri. It has recently been published in Une Jeunesse/La Neuvaine du petit faune (Paris: Quintes-feuilles, 2010), pp. 139-154.

In fact, Jacques himself had his last will drawn up in French in Villa Lysis 21 November 1921; after the recitation of the Italian version on 16 November 1923, it was registered by Notary Aniello Paturzo from neighbouring Piano di Sorrento on 23 November 1923 (see: F. Esposito, op. cit., p. 62-63; À la Jeunesse d’Amour, op. cit., pp. 163-164).

According to Peyrefitte’s novel; I can find no other documentation. Peyrefitte’s opinion is highly probable. It raises the question of why d’Adelsvärd visited von Gloeden with Corrado just as he had with Nino years before. He must have been fond of von Gloeden’s photos, and perhaps he wanted both youngsters preserved in the work of the most famous photographer of boys at that time. Perhaps these photos will some day come to light? R. Peyrefitte, L’Exilé de Capri, pp. 292, 298, says that d’Adelsvärd also had sketches made of Nino and Corrado by the sculptor Vincenzo Gemito (see also Note 143). The imprint (lower left corner) on d’Adelsvärd’s photo, sent as a gift to Georges Eekhoud, and now in the Archives et Musée de la Littérature at Brussels (see M. Lucien, op. cit., cover), testifies that there also were contacts between d’Adelsvärd and the Bohemian photographer Rudolph Lehnter and his German assistant Ernst Landrock, famous of their photos (and post cards) of (nude) oriental boys (see: Ph. Cardinal, L’Orient d’un photographe. Lehnter & Landrock, Lausanne-Paris: Favre, 1987; Winckelmann [pseudonym], “Lehnter & Landrock. Photographers of the Orient” in Gayme 3:2, 1997, pp. 26-33).

The Dutch in memoriam, “De dood van baron Adelsward van Verzen” in Het Vaderland: staat- en letterkundig nieuwsblad 12 December 1923, p. Avondblad B 1, states that Jacques had been at odds with his sister “who had never forgiven his conduct.” On 8 December 1923, in the presence of Judge Ferrara, the autopsy was carried out by Vincenzo Maione, Professor in Forensic Medicine at the University of Naples, and Vincenzo Gianturco, Professor in Pathological Anatomy, and lasted from 11.30 a.m. to 15.30 p.m. See: “L’autopsia del cadavere del barone De Fersen” in Il Messaggero 8 December 1923, and “Sulla morte del Barone De Fersen. L’autopsia eseguita ieri confermerrebbe la morte per sincope” in Il Mezzogiorno 8/9 December 1923.

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The triste héroïs des messes noires Jacques d’Adelsward meurt mystérieusement à Capri’ in *Le Matin* 10 December 1923, p. 1 [with a portrait of d’Adelsward].
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**Typescripts**


**Internet sites**

- Archivio Storico. Album Fotografici. ‘Famiglia Adelswärd-Fersen.’ ([http://www.archiviofotografia.it/gallery.php?Categoria1_Click=7&Categoria2_Click=7&ID_Categoria1=1&ID_Categoria2=40&ID_Categoria3=89&Categoria2=Famiglia Adelswärd-Fersen&Img_x=Fersen 021.jpg](http://www.archiviofotografia.it/gallery.php?Categoria1_Click=7&Categoria2_Click=7&ID_Categoria1=1&ID_Categoria2=40&ID_Categoria3=89&Categoria2=Famiglia Adelswärd-Fersen&Img_x=Fersen 021.jpg)).
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Music

Les Amants Solitaires (2003), composed and performed by the French soprano and accordionist Nicole Renaud; contains four songs based on poems by d’Adelswärd: ‘Les extatiques’ and ‘Gongs’ from Ainsi chantait Marsyas, ‘Chanson cruelle, chanson d’adieu II’ and ‘T’en souvient-il?…’ from L'Hymnaire d’Adonis (CD-Label: Le Producteur Invisible; Cat.Nr. 9287).


Cinque Liriche per Canto e Pianoforte (P108; 1918), by the Italian composer Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936); contains two songs based on poems from L’Hymnaire d’Adonis by J. de Fersen: ‘3. Par les soirs…’ and ‘4. Par l’étéreinte’ (CD-Label: King; first issue Cat.Nr. NKCD359, and CD-Label: Channel Classics; Cat.Nr. CCS 14998).

Les extatiques, by the French composer Jean Nouguès (1875-1932); song based on a poem from Ainsi chantait Marsyas.


Il pleut, gentil berger (P123; 1919), by Ottorino Respighi; song based on a poem from L’Hymnaire d’Adonis (CD-Label: Nuova Era; Cat.Nr. 7182, and CD-Label: Channel Classics; Cat.Nr. CCS 14998).

Films

Musik, die sich entfernt: Capri und die Träume des Cyrill K. (1984), directed by Ferry Radax.

Stage performances

Musique pour toi seul/Musica per te solo (2011), directed by Jacopo Serafini.

Sources of Figures

2. Cover by Louis Morin.
4. Powerstation Herserange; to the right the d’Adelswärd family castle. Collection of the author.
12. Caricature by František Kupka, in MESSES NOIRES. Le Canard Sauvage 1:19 (1903) [no pagination].
13. “Two Removals” Caricature by František Kupka, in MESSES NOIRES. Le Canard Sauvage 1:19 (1903) [no pagination].
16. “At the Aesthete’s - ... My Master is busy...” Caricature by Hermann-Paul, in MESSES NOIRES. Le Canard Sauvage 1:19 (1903) [no pagination].
17. First page of the decision by the Ninth Chamber of the Tribunal de la Seine, 3 December 1903.
19. Cover by Claude Simpson.
28. Frontal nude of Nino Cesarini.
29. Bathing boys at Marina, Capri (c. 1900). Picture post card by Richter & Co., Naples. Collection of the author [there also exists a copy of this post card, with the postmark “Capri (Napoli) 18 Giu[gno 19]04,” in the correspondence of Georges Eekhoud in the Archives et Musée de la Littérature at Brussels (ML 2970/543), written by an undecipherable sender].
34. First World War-propaganda post cards: a naked German boy, sitting on a chamber pot, is polishing the German helmet as an act of civil duty, whereas it is used as a chamber pot by the French and the British. Collection of the author.
36. Cover by Ernest Marie Brisset of Hei Hsiang. Le parfum noir (1921).

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